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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you support the proposal to include the CNMI in the national food stamp program?

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INSIDE

NATION



A U.S. soldier suspected of killing at least 16 Afghan civilians in a nighttime assault is from a brigade that was the first in the Army to use the Stryker.

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ASIA



A Philippine court ordered the arrest Tuesday of former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's husband for allegedly receiving millions of dollars in bribes from a Chinese telecommunications company.

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LIFE & STYLE



If Jennifer Lawrence looks confident and composed shooting a bow in the movie, "The Hunger Games" this spring, it's because she's had some Olympic-caliber coaching.

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AFTER SENATE KILLS SAIPAN CASINO BILL

'Stupid' remark irks Rota, Tinian senators

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Rota and Tinian senators are taking issue with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's remarks describing some people from Rota and Tinian as "stupid" for rejecting yet again a House bill legalizing casino gambling on Saipan.

"I just wish that the governor will be more respectful and civil," Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

Manglona said the governor should not divide the people of the CNMI.

"We are one people of the Commonwealth. I ask that the governor don't try to divide us

like this," he added.

Fitial made the controversial comment in an interview with *Saipan Tribune* and KSPN on Saturday morning regarding his views on the defeat of a Saipan casino bill.

"I am going to pursue my economic initiatives including a new popular initiative for the casino because I don't think we

should continue to have stupid people from Rota and Tinian dictate the lives of the majority. And that's the problem here and they know it and they're gonna suffer for (it) because of what they did," Fitial said.

The governor blamed the bill's defeat on "politics."

"Like I told you, politics is
See ROTA on Page 4

AS WORK ON POPULAR INITIATIVE BEGINS

Expert: Politics, self interest, real issues behind defeat of Saipan casino bill

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Politics and self interest are the real issues behind Saipan casino bill's latest defeat and not problems related with gambling itself, a Macau-based Asian gaming consultant said even as pro-casino lawmakers in the CNMI prepare a popular initiative so that the question of casino gaming on Saipan can be placed in the Nov 6 ballot.

Ben Lee, managing partner of IGamiX Management & Consulting Ltd., said some lawmakers' objections to a bill legalizing casino gambling on Saipan are "purely out of self preservation as that solitary casino (on Tinian) is the only employer on that island."

"The fact that the casino has not paid their staff salary for three months nor their government tax dues seems not to be

See EXPERT on Page 4

Alam, Crisostomo top CNMI Geography Bee

► **Students to compete against Guam, American Samoa reps in regional tilt**

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Masrur S. Alam and Craig Crisostomo were named champions of the CNMI-wide Geography Bee challenge conducted by the Public School System.

The two will compete against Geography Bee winners from

Guam and American Samoa in the regional competition set for March 30.



Alam



Crisostomo

to compete in the CNMI-wide challenge last January. If victorious in the regional tilt, one of them will fly to Washington, D.C. to vie for the national title.

Alam is an eighth grader from Hopwood Junior High

See ALAM on Page 4



MAKING TAXPAYERS' MONEY WORK

Ramon Ignacio, an electrician with Spectrum Electric Inc., replaces a light bulb with a brighter yet more energy efficient one that consumes only 28 watts compared to the old one that was using 175 watts, on a power pole at the back of the legislative building on Capital Hill yesterday afternoon. This American Recovery and Reinvestment Act-funded project covers Saipan, Tinian, and Rota public facilities.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

PSS justifies higher budget proposal. PAGE 2
Fund's three local investments up for sale. PAGE 3

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Local

PSS justifies higher budget proposal

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Board of Education chair Marylou S. Ada and Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan have justified their higher budget proposal for the new fiscal year, saying the \$40 million they recommended is what the Public School System needs to maintain its current operations.

In a joint letter to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Ada and Sablan said the increase in budget recommendation was largely due to the escalating costs due to the NMI Retirement Fund's defined benefit employer contribution rate, increasing utility rates, and the cost of inflation.

"In light of our constitutional mandate, our focus remains on protecting the educational integrity of the classroom. This budget supports that principle. Of the total FY 2013 budget for personnel, 91 percent is allocated for school staffing including bilingual, special education, JROTC, and Head Start personnel. The schools will also receive an estimated over 90 percent of the allocated budget for operation [all others]," Ada and Sablan told the governor.

They said the \$40 million proposed budget reflects an in-



Ada



Sablan

crease of nearly \$4 million over the FY 2012 budget request (which was \$36 million). "The increase is attributable to the upward adjustment of the Retirement Fund rate from 20 percent to 37.9 percent," they said, adding that the rate increase will require that PSS remit to the Fund the total sum of \$5.2 million in FY 2013.

According to the education officials, the proposed budget for operations expenditures also shows an increase because of the expected continued escalation costs of fuel, supplies, and other operational expenditures. The proposed allocation for all others is \$2.18 million for FY 2013—an increase of \$562,172 over allocated amount in the proposed budget for FY 2012.

The budget allocation for CUC also increased from FY 2012's recommendation of only

\$1.3 million to \$4 million for new fiscal year.

Other increases in the new budget proposal include salary adjustment for teachers which shows an increased of \$245,000. PSS also forecast an increase to expenditure for Medicare, insurance, and DB plan by about \$20,000.

"As the entire Commonwealth government faces another fiscal year of further belt tightening and austerity, the board and PSS are both committed to cost-cutting and savings initiatives. We have also implemented beginning in FY 2012 an aggressive energy conservation program to cut electricity usage in our schools and in our admin offices," they said, adding that PSS expenditures are expected to remain within its authorized budget level in FY 2012 which is \$30 million.

\$20,000 cash bail for woman who allegedly ran over husband with car

Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho yesterday imposed a \$20,000 cash bail on a woman who allegedly chased and ran over with a car her common-law husband Saturday morning in Garapan.

After the bail hearing, Camacho remanded defendant Carmelita Misa Guiao, 34, to the custody of the Department of Corrections.

Camacho said Guiao can file a bail modification motion.

Preliminary hearing will be on March 21 at 9am.

The defendant was taken to the court on charges of aggravated assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, contempt, disturbing the peace,

pedestrian right of way on sidewalk, operators to exercise due care, accident (auto-pedestrian hit and run), reckless driving, and driving while under the influence of alcohol.

Assistant attorney general Darren Robinson said under the bail schedule, the charges require a \$16,500 cash bail, but that he recommends \$100,000 cash bail.

Asked by Camacho how he came up with that big amount, Robinson said the defendant poses a danger to the community and that she is a flight risk.

Assistant public defender Daniel Guidotti, counsel for the defendant, argued that the \$100,000 is excessive.

The victim, a 42-year-old man, sustained serious injuries and was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center for observation.

Police Officer Jason Tarkong said that investigation showed that Guiao chased the victim aboard a car and ran him over with it in Upper Miha, Garapan. She then allegedly fled the scene.

Tarkong said that prior to the incident, the couple were drinking a case of beer then had an argument. The victim grabbed his clothes and leave the house.

As the victim was walking away, Guiao allegedly chased him with the car and hit him with the vehicle twice. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

Robbery suspect allowed to post \$10K property bond

Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho yesterday allowed a robbery suspect to post a \$10,000 property bond.

Camacho determined the two proposed third party custodians for defendant Benjamin Jones Castro Jr. as suitable.

Camacho placed Castro under house arrest.

Arraignment will be on March 26 at 9am.

Assistant attorney general Darren Robinson opposed Castro's application for a bail of \$10,000 property bond.

Robinson said at a minimum,

Castro should be required to post bail at least some cash.

Robinson said the defendant launched an unprovoked attack on an employee of Hollywood Video and fled with the money from the cash register.

Robinson said Castro is involved in another drug-related case.

"Based on these two facts, the Commonwealth considers Defendant a danger to the community," the prosecutor said.

A female cashier was injured when Castro allegedly robbed Hollywood Video in San Jose

last Feb. 24. She, however, still managed to jot down the license plate of the suspect's getaway vehicle, enabling the police to identify him.

Castro surrendered to the police last week.

The victim sustained moderate injuries to her right jaw. The suspect reportedly took \$379 cash from video shop's cash register.

Police said Castro locked the cashier in a rear chokehold using his left forearm. When she attempted to free herself, the suspect allegedly punched her on the jaw. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

Fund's three local investments up for sale

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Not one but all three local investments of the NMI Retirement Fund are now up for sale to interested parties, according to board chair Sixto K. Igisomar.

He disclosed to *Saipan Tribune* that aside from the member home loan program, request for proposals for two other portfolios of the pension agency were approved to be issued out soon.

These include RFPs for the Commonwealth Government Credit Union portfolio and the receivables for the Judicial Building loan.

"The Fund is selling out its account receivables/portfolios in those three investments. The board also did approve the RFPs for them [credit union and judicial building loan]," he admitted to *Saipan Tribune* during a break in the board's last meeting.

Igisomar said that the "sell-out" is part of the Fund's streamlining measures since last year.

"The whole idea is to reduce our capacity so we can focus more on the member retirees [on Defined Benefit plan]," he said, optimistic that the agency will receive a pool of interested parties to acquire the said portfolios.

Saipan Tribune learned that

RFP for member home loan program was issued on Feb. 8 and closed on March 12. As of last week, three requests were received by the board and which they discussed in a closed-door meeting last week.

The Fund has a total investment of \$5.5 million in the member home loan program.

Documents obtained from the Fund show that the agency has 104 accounts under the member home loan which principal amounts to \$5.2 million. Of these loans, 32 were determined delinquent which amounts to \$2.015 million as of Jan. 31, 2012.

Records also show that

the program has 14 "bad or doubtful" loans amounting to \$953,644 while there are 18 accounts that are one year past due but considered recoverable loans. Board officials said they have tried several steps to save the program, but it seems the best way to do is outsource or sell the entire portfolio, probably to a bank.

For the judicial building loan, the Fund has recorded approximately \$1.2 million in outstanding arrears from the government as of Nov. 30, 2011.

The Judiciary failed to satisfy the monthly remittance of \$120,000 as required in the loan

agreement. This loan is considered investment of the Fund because this account was recorded as loan receivable. It was the Judicial Building Financing Act of 1994 that allowed the CNMI government to secure a loan from the NMI Retirement Fund in order to build the Guma Hustisia, which has a maturity date of Aug. 14, 2015. The construction of the Judicial Complex began in 1995. It was completed in May 1998. The revenues generated by the Judiciary were the primary source of repayment of the loan.

For the credit union, it was disclosed that the Fund has still outstanding receivables from the original \$2 million loaned out to the union in 1996. It was earlier admitted by the credit

union and the Fund that due to drop in the union's revenues, its monthly obligation of \$10,000 to the loan has been affected. At present, more than half of the obligation has been fulfilled.

Igisomar told *Saipan Tribune* that besides these local investments, other programs of the agency are being proposed to be transferred to other agencies such as the Workers Compensation Commission and the Group Health Life Insurance Program. Bills are pending at the Legislature proposing WCC to be included among the Department of Commerce's duties while GHLP to be transferred either under the office of management and budget or office of personnel and management.

Tinian mayor opposes cut in retirees' benefits

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Tinian and Aguingan Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz expressed his opposition to the proposed reduction in retirees' benefits, saying the move will create further chaos on Retirement Fund members who are already suffering.

For the mayor, it is better to take away the benefits of spouses and adopted children to help address the financial crisis of the pension agency.

Since the beginning, he described the retirement program as "super generous" in providing benefits resulting to its current dilemma.

Besides providing benefits to adopted children and spouses, the

mayor said the Fund could also take aggressive collection efforts on people who owe the Fund such as borrowers of member home loan program, one of the local investments of the pension agency which reportedly has huge receivables from borrowers.

Document requested from the Fund indicated that there are 32 out of the 104 loans that are delinquent. Fourteen accounts from the delinquency list are classified as bad or doubtful loans by the pension agency. The Fund recorded a total of \$5.2 million in 104 principal accounts and delinquency is estimated at \$2 million.

Dela Cruz added that most important of all, the central government has to pay its share.

"The government has to find the money to pay its share. If the government continues to hold back their contribution, it's never going to work out," he told *Saipan Tribune* Saturday, adding that the municipality of Tinian, despite its own fiscal challenges, is faithfully paying its up-to-date share to the Fund. However, he admitted that the municipality is still paying the 37 percent actuarial rate and not the 60 percent imposed by the Fund beginning this fiscal year.

Based on the unaudited report of Fund comptroller Pablito Amog, the combined unpaid employer contributions as of Jan. 31, 2012 amounted to \$224.645 million of which \$182.2 million is owed by the central government and \$42.4 million is owed by the autonomous agencies.

Records from the Fund indicate that the Public School

System tops the list with \$27.8 million in unpaid contributions. Also on the list are Northern Marianas College with \$6.7

million in debt; Commonwealth Utilities Corp. with \$4.2 million; Tinian Municipal Treasury with \$1.6 million; Marianas Visitors Authority which incurred \$808,737; and Commonwealth Health Center with \$810,089,

among others.

According to the Fund, these agencies incurred this additional liability for not implementing the actuarially determined rate of 60 percent in the remittance of their employer contribution.

Smiling Cove Marine closed March 14-15

The Smiling Cove Marina on Saipan will be temporarily closed to the general public from 3pm on March 14 to 5pm on March 15.

The closure is in preparation for the *Queen Mary II's* visit to Saipan as the marina will be used for visiting guests.

With this development, marina operation will be moved to the Outer Cove Marina. In addition, the Smiling Cove Marina boat launch ramp will be also closed.

Those who use the ramp are redirected to use the Department of Public Works boat launch ramp across Division of Fish

and Wildlife in Lower Base or the Garapan Fishing Base boat launch ramp.

Resident boat owners or operators of Smiling Cove Marina are encouraged to contact the CNMI office of the Department of Homeland Security, Commonwealth Ports Authority police, or stop by DPS Boating Safety for arrangements. (PR)

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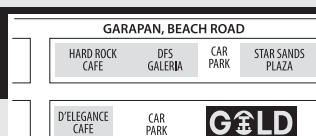
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USCIS asked to speed up processing of proposed EB-5 regional center in CNMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial asked U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Director Alejandro Mayorkas to expedite processing of a pending application for a regional economic center in the CNMI for EB-5 or immigrant investors, so that the islands can start realizing job and economic gains.

USCIS administers the "EB-5" program created by Congress in 1990 to stimulate the U.S. economy through job creation and capital investment by foreign investors.

The minimum qualifying in-

vestment in the U.S. is \$1 million, but in high unemployment area or rural area in the U.S., the minimum qualifying investment is \$500,000. The investor has to create or preserve at least 10 full-time jobs for qualifying U.S. workers within two years of the immigrant investor's admission to the U.S. as a Conditional permanent resident.

Fitial's letter, a copy of which was obtained from the administration this week, was referring to an application submitted to USCIS Processing Center in December 2011 by a private entity, Marianas EB-5 Regional Center, and was given the

unique identifier number ID 1202050579.

Marianas EB-5 Regional Center is a partnership between Robert H. Jones, founder and chairman/CEO of the Triple J Group of Companies, and Juan-Carlos Benitez, president of the Washington Pacific Economic Development Group and a former special counsel for the Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices at the U.S. Department of Justice.

"I understand the tremendous workload that your organization is faced with; however, the expedient processing of the Re-

gional Center application will be greatly appreciated," Fitial told Mayorkas.

Under a pilot immigration program first enacted in 1992 and regularly reauthorized since, certain EB-5 visas are set aside for investors in Regional Centers designated by USCIS based on proposals for promoting economic growth.

Michael Ada, principal owner of Integrated Professional Solutions LLC that has an exclusive contract with Jones on this undertaking, confirmed yesterday that Marianas EB-5 Regional Center is now just waiting for a final decision from USCIS.

"We have already received a word from USCIS that they are processing the application. Hopefully we can get it approved soon. A lot of investors prefer this visa because of its job creation potentials," Ada told Saipan Tribune yesterday.

More information about Marianas EB-5 Regional Center is available at <http://marianaseb5.us.com>.

Fitial said the CNMI is currently addressing the impacts that the changes in immigration through U.S. Public Law 110-229 have brought.

"With a tremendous amount of uncertainty brought about by

the myriad of dynamics, inclusive of the implementation of PL 110-229 and the mandated increase in minimum wages, the prospects for new investments into our jurisdiction are very limited," he said.

The governor told Mayorkas that "the quick implementation of the EB-5 investment program through an approved Regional Economic Center, the CNMI will hopefully be able to effectively strategize on attracting qualified EB-5 investors to participate in quality, employment creating projects and new jobs that will breathe new life back into our struggling island."

STUPID

From Page 1

the root of all our economic and social problems in the Commonwealth. And we got to get rid of these politicians who only care for themselves. They are very up to date in requesting for their subsistence allowance, in advancing for their subsistence allowance. They don't give a damn about the livelihood of their own people," Fitial said.

The governor reiterated that casinos will generate new money "that we don't have."

Manglona and other senators reiterated that the issue

should be left to Saipan voters to decide.

The senators who opposed the House casino bill are supporting Fitial and other pro-casino lawmakers' proposal to initiate a popular initiative so that the question can be presented to voters in the Nov. 6 election.

Manglona said a Senate bill that has been pending with the House for months would have allowed the question to be put before voters but the House has sat on the bill.

Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian) said casino is not a "silver bullet" or the only "economic savior" for the CNMI.

"There have been lots of proposals on improving the economy, but they have always been focused on casinos... And why would an elected official call other people stupid when they cannot respect the will of the Saipan voters who rejected the casino twice," he said in a separate interview.

Hofschneider said the last time he checked, it was the same governor who had promised to bring in a peanut butter factory, a shoe factory, and a pozzolan mining industry.

Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian) said if leaders really want to focus on revenue-generation to help the economy, they

should help Tinian and Rota's casino industry.

Manglona, for his part, reiterated that the Senate believes there are a lot of alternatives to establishing a casino industry on Saipan, including repeal of Article 12 or the land alienation provision of the NMI Constitution, enforcement of tax laws and rules, placing the CNMI under the national food stamp program, moving capital improvement projects faster, and reducing tax rebates by 10 to 20 percent.

"The Senate passed a bill that became law that would increase the salary of the Revenue and Taxation director to entice

qualified applicants and step up enforcement of tax laws, but up to now the administration has not been able to hire one. On CIPs, why are we just receiving \$9 million when we could have been receiving \$14 million?" Manglona said.

'Fee simple'

Besides a casino industry, Fitial is also pushing for a fee simple initiative which he shared with lawmakers during a full leadership meeting in January.

This initiative, as he has proposed, will allow existing hotels and golf courses to acquire through fee simple the public lands they are cur-

rently leasing from the CNMI government within 180 days after voters approve of such a move—a proposal that some lawmakers said is "bold" and needs careful consideration.

That initiative will allow, for example, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Coral Ocean Point Resort and Golf Course, Laolao Bay Golf Resort, Rota Resort Golf Course, Pacific Islands Club Saipan, and Marianas Country Club and Golf Course, among other hotels and golf courses, to acquire the lands they are leasing fee simple.

This initiative will amend Article 11 of the NMI Constitution.

EXPERT

From Page 1

a factor in their consideration," Lee said in an interview with *Macau Daily Times*.

But Rota and Tinian senators have repeatedly said they want Saipan voters to decide on the issue.

"Let the people of Saipan decide," Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) said yesterday. "I support former governor Froilan Tenorio and Governor Fitial's decision to push for a popular initiative."

Lee visited Saipan in August 2011 to make a neutral presentation before lawmakers and the administration on what he thinks about the prospect of a casino industry on Saipan.

Seven months later, Lee's company has been retained by a private regional firm to conduct a

feasibility study on the prospects of introducing gaming to Saipan.

The House casino bill that the Senate killed on Wednesday night allows for a percentage of the tax revenues to be shared with Tinian and Rota.

Lee said he sees the latest rejection as "nothing more than a negotiating move to increase their share."

"However by engaging in this brinkmanship strategy they are in danger of dragging the whole CNMI economy down on its collective knees. For some reason, the local Saipan residents are not asking the question 'why is Tinian objecting to us having casinos when they have issued 5 licenses themselves?'" Lee told *Macau Daily Times*.

Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan), who is one of the strongest advocates for Saipan casino in the House, said yesterday the popular initiative he's work-

ing allocates only to Saipan all revenues from casino gaming should the initiative pass.

Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan), author of the bill that the Senate killed last week, said he is "very disappointed" with senators' decision.

"One casino license alone costs \$10 million. That's money we can have right away. If we have five investors, there's \$50 million, plus the other economic benefits... I believe the Senate refused to acknowledge the economic impact of this bill," he added.

Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan), who is also pushing for a popular initiative, said they only need about 1,600 signatures to have the Saipan casino question placed on the ballot.

The House members reiterated that they do not see a proposal from the Senate that will equal the benefits of allowing a casino industry on Saipan, adding that the

senators' proposals are minute.

Lee echoed this observation.

"Right now, the government has had to reduce the paid working days of its staff, and they have issues with a serious shortfall in the funding of their pension fund. There are currently no other viable alternatives on the horizon for them except to try and stimulate their once healthy tourism industry," he told the *Macau daily*.

Lee said the problem with the CNMI situation "is one of entrenched self interests."

"Tinian has had a casino on it for about a decade or so, but due to the difficulties in access from Saipan and the lack of any other supporting attractions, the casino has not made a profit from the beginning. Despite that history, the Tinian senate went ahead and issued four more licenses which have not progressed beyond the inking of the

agreements. Rota also issued its own gaming license which saw a small casino open and shut after just three months," he said.

He also does not believe that gambling itself is the real issue.

"The locals already have walking access to the many dozens of video poker arcades all over the island and access to the casino in Tinian. In fact, one of the accompanying clauses to the casino bill called for the closure of all the arcades, which would ameliorate the concerns over problem gambling," he added.

Lee said as a neutral yet interested observer, he sees a lack of leadership amongst some of the local elders who object strenuously to the idea of casinos yet remain silent when asked for alternative suggestions to their economic and social dilemma.

"Right now, there are no jobs being created, rather, the reverse holds true. With the number of

tourist arrivals declining month on month, paid working hours are being cut in all sectors. If the pay in the government sector was to be cut yet again, and this is a distinct possibility, I would say the chance of the subject arising yet again is very strong," he told *Macau Daily Times*.

Lee repeated what he said in August about not expecting huge casino resorts on Saipan but he pointed out that gaming could still play a significant role in revitalizing new investments "and more importantly in underpinning new air access arrangements which will boost the critical Korean and China tourism segments."

"My advice to them now would be to look not just at the direct gaming tax revenue, but at the larger picture, which would be the tourism receipts that will come in with the new gaming tourists," he told the *Macau daily*.

ALAM

From Page 1

School and the son of Manzurul and Touhida Alam. He topped the school-level geography bee where he bested 30 other contenders.

In a visit to his school yesterday, Alam told *Saipan Tribune* that he's excited for the upcoming regional contest where he will be given a written examination from the National Geography Society at the PSS central office.

In preparation for the competition, Alam said he will continue his self-study and devote

more time in researching and reading related materials that will aid him in the upcoming contest.

Early this month, Alam was also recognized as the second top speller in the Scripps Spelling Bee in Guam. The 11-year-old student is also an active participant of mathcourt and matholympiad at his school.

This year marks Alam's fourth time in Geography Bee but the first time to actually bag the top award in the CNMI-wide contest. He started joining the Geography Bee competition when he was in fourth grade.

"This is my first time to win the Geography Bee in the CNMI

and it really feels great because I was adjudged one of the bests on the island and may get the chance to go to Washington, D.C. for the national [event]," he told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, adding that if lucky, this will be his first-ever experience in the national competition.

Hopwood Junior High vice principal John Magofna Pialur is proud of Alam's achievement and reaffirmed the school's full support.

"We wish him the best of luck [in the Geography Bee regional] and we will always be here for support. He did a lot of hard work and we're pretty sure he will be successful and

will make us proud again," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Craig Crisostomo, meantime, is the son of Gerald and Ann Marie Crisostomo. The fifth grader topped the school level competition at Tinian Elementary last January.

According to TES principal Dionne Santos, the school is proud of Crisostomo for his outstanding achievement.

"This is Craig's second consecutive win of the school-level Geography Bee. He is a shining example and model of determination and perseverance. Coming from a tiny island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, the outstanding achievements of our students

magnify our place on the map and in the world. We wish Craig the best of luck in the state competition and hope that he will represent our islands in the nationals," Santos said yesterday.

Saipan Tribune learned that Crisostomo has not only participated in the Geography Bee this year, but has represented his grade-level in the mathcourt competition and secured a slot in the regional competition, placing second in his category. Yesterday, the fifth grader was still off-island competing in the Chamorro Language Competition in Guam.

According to Fasefulu Tigilau, PSS coordinator for the so-

cial studies program, Alam and Crisostomo will be given written examination simultaneously on March 30.

Tigilau will oversee Alam on Saipan while Crisostomo will be supervised by another coordinator on Tinian.

Result of the regional examination is expected to be released after two weeks. The national geography bee is slated on May 22-24 in Washington, D.C. Alam and Crisostomo were named CNMI winners last March 1 when the national organizer released the result of their written tests. Geography Bee is conducted among 4th to 8th graders in public and private schools.

Camacho revokes probation of habitual offender

»Re-imposes five-year prison term

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho yesterday revoked the probation of a habitual offender and re-imposed the remaining five years sentence in his previous case over the burglary at Marianas Cable Vision in Susupe in 2006.

Camacho said defendant Joseph A. Crisostimo's long criminal history and recent charges bespeak a deep lack of respect for the law, and the people of the CNMI.

"Defendant appears to have mistaken the court's previous kindness for weakness," Camacho said.

cho said. "The court expects that defendant now appreciates the extent of judicial discretion."

The judge ordered that defendant "is not eligible for parole, early release, or the like, he is to serve day to day five years from this date."

Camacho admonished the defendant that he remains fully liable for restitution to MCV pursuant to the court's previous order.

Camacho said based on evidence presented at yesterday's hearing, he finds by a preponderance of the evidence that Crisostimo violated the terms of his probation by being in possession of a controlled substance in violation of the CNMI laws.

Crisostimo served five years of a 10-year jail sentence imposed on him after his conviction for burglarizing MCV in 2006. His brother, Calistro, and William Jerome T. Deleon Guerrero, were also convicted and served jail term in that burglary in which a safe box containing \$34,319.25 in cash, checks, and credit card payments were stolen.

Crisostimo was released on probation Dec. 18, 2011.

After Crisostimo was arrested last January for possession of methamphetamine or "ice," the Office of the Attorney General then sought the revocation of the probation and suspended sentence of Crisostimo.

Adult Probation Officer Jose P. Mafnas, in his affidavit of probation violations, said that on March 20, 2008, the court ordered the defendant to pay a \$25 court assessment fee within 30 days of his release from custody; not possess or consume any alcoholic beverages during the entire term of his probation; and obey all CNMI and federal laws.

Mafnas said Crisostimo failed to make any payments toward his court assessment fee of \$25 within 30 days of his release from custody.

Mafnas said the defendant was also arrested on Jan. 11, 2012 for a drug-related charge.

Mafnas said as Crisostimo was arrested for a drug-related charge he therefore failed to obey all CNMI and federal laws.

The Office of the Attorney General filed an amended information, charging Crisostimo with illegal possession of controlled substance, and criminal contempt.

At yesterday's hearing, the OAG called to the witness stand: Probation Officer Mafnas, Detective Steven Castro, Detective Dennis Reyes, co-defendant John Namauleg, and Drug Enforcement Agency special agent Bryan Todd.

Namauleg testified he saw Crisostimo purchase "ice", saw him smoke it and saw the arresting officers recover a glass pipe from the backseat of the car.

Assistant attorney general Russell Lorfing appeared for the government. Assistant public defender Douglas Hartig served

as counsel for the defendant.

Based on Probation records, beginning in 1996, Crisostimo was charged in 10 separate cases, including the one for which he is now on probation. The charges included among others, theft, burglary, assault and battery, criminal mischief, conspiracy, receiving stolen property, theft of vehicle, and possession of a controlled substance.

During approximately the same period, Crisostimo was charged in an additional 14 separate cases which never proceeded to the OAG for prosecution. The charges included, among others, assault and battery, criminal trespass, disturbing the peace, child abuse/neglect, resisting arrest, reckless driving, assault with a dangerous weapon, and criminal use of a firearm.

Odoshi, Rabauliman appointed to Arts Council board

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture board has two new members.

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos appointed Viviana W. Odoshi and Mark O. Rabauliman, both of whom will be representing the Carolinian community on Saipan.

Odoshi, a former legal secretary at the Attorney General's Office who retired last year, will serve the unexpired term of Vivian P. Nogis which expires on



Odoshi

March 4, 2014.

Rabauliman, who works at the Department of Commerce, will serve until Sept. 14, 2014.

"The governor and I have been informed of the important work before the council and have every confidence that you will consistently devote your time and efforts to represent the interest of our community," Inos said in his separate appointment letters to Odoshi and Rabauliman dated March 6.

Odoshi and Rabauliman's appointment to the Arts Council board do not require the advice and consent of the Senate. They are, however, required to file a Statement of Financial Interest with the Public Auditor.

Odoshi, who makes mwarmwar and beads for family members, said she has been involved with the Arts Council during the 25th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival but this will be her first time to work on the council's board.

"Arts and culture have always had a soft place in my heart," Odoshi told *Saipan Tribune*. "I'm glad about my appointment and I hope I could be of assistance to the board."

Other Arts Council members are Joseph Diaz, Ana Teregeyo, Esther Sound, and Frank Norita.

MVA, tourism partners welcome Queen Mary 2

The Marianas Visitors Authority is joining forces with other government and tourism industry partners to give a warm "hafa adai yan tirow" welcome to passenger cruise ship *Queen Mary II*, arriving tomorrow, March 15, on Saipan.

The MVA, Commonwealth Council for Arts & Culture, and Dept. of Community and Cultural Affairs' Garapan Street Market will welcome the *Queen Mary II* with local vendors sell-

ing food, arts, and crafts at Smiling Cove Marina.

"Visitors arriving via ships are an important part of our overall tourism arrivals, and we're pleased to welcome the *Queen Mary II* to our beautiful islands," said MVA Community Projects manager Martin Duenas.


The British flagged ship carries over 3,600 passengers and crew and will be in Saipan for the day. (MVA)

DOUBLE STAMPS DOUBLE SAVINGS

For a limited time, gas up at any Shell Station and get Lucky 7 Double Stamps for each gallon of gas purchased. Double Stamps allow you to redeem your Lucky 7 Passport in half the time, which means more value for you.

Hurry into any Shell today for a limited time





NOTICE OF SALE

CDA FORECLOSED PROPERTIES

The Commonwealth Development Authority (CDA) hereby gives notice that it is seeking interested buyers, bids and proposals for the fee simple purchase or the leasing of its foreclosed properties. The specific foreclosed properties available for sale or lease are:

	LOT NO.	LOCATION	SIZE (sqm)	DESCRIPTION	MIN.BID
1	345 R 114	Sinapalo, Rota	960	House & Lot	150,000
2	Tr 22089-1-4	Mananana, Rota	929	Vacant	3,000
3	Tr 21769-3-4	Ginalangan, Rota	922.5	Vacant	1,500
4	Tr 21769-3-5	Ginalangan, Rota	922.5	Vacant	1,500
5	230 R 01	Tatgua, Rota	9,384.5	Vacant	75,000
6	Part of 3290-1	Linansa, Rota	5,000	Vacant	3,750
7	Part of 565 R 02	As Nieves, Rota	3,000	Vacant	14,700
8	Tr 21769-R2-3	Ginalangan, Rota	900	Vacant	2,800
9	Tr 21769-R2-4	Ginalangan, Rota	850	Vacant	2,400
10	Tr 22675-6	Talafofo, Saipan	5,016	Vacant	40,000
11	Tr 22675-7	Talafofo, Saipan	5,016	Vacant	40,000
12	Tr 22675-8	Talafofo, Saipan	5,016	Vacant	40,000
13	Tr 22675-9	Talafofo, Saipan	5,017	Vacant	40,000
14	Tr 22675-10	Talafofo, Saipan	5,017	Vacant	40,000
15	Tr 22675-11	Talafofo, Saipan	5,017	Vacant	40,000
16	Tr 22675-R3	Talafofo, Saipan	5,016	Vacant	40,000
17	Tr 21837-3 New-4, Tr 21837-3 New-2 Tr 21837-3 New-1	As Lito, Saipan	3,000 750 1,286	Vacant	40,000
18	278-6	I-Denni, Saipan	929	Vacant	15,500
19	278-11	I-Denni, Saipan	929	Vacant	15,500
20	278-12	I-Denni, Saipan	929	Vacant	14,000
21	Tr 22805-1-4	As Teo, Saipan	2,241	Vacant	20,000
22	004 I 05	San Antonio, Saipan	479	House & Lot	50,000
23	131 T 31	Marpo, Tinian	1,322	House & Lot	50,000
24	251 T 52 & 53	Marpo Valley, Tinian	7,571	Vacant	50,000
25	031 T 19	Tachungya, Tinian	1,085	Vacant	21,700
26	031 T 20	Tachungya, Tinian	1,080	Vacant	21,600
27	031 T 21	Tachungya, Tinian	1,080	Vacant	21,600
28	031 T 22	Tachungya, Tinian	1,089	Vacant	21,780
29	031 T 23	Tachungya, Tinian	1,089	Vacant	21,780

The following terms and conditions apply:

Fee Simple

- The purchase price shall not be less than the listed Minimum Bid price.
- A non-refundable deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid upon award by cash, cashier's check or credit card (Visa or Mastercard), with the remaining balance due within ten (10) business days of the award.
- Failure to make timely payment of the remaining balance will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in the property will automatically revert back to CDA.
- A quitclaim deed will be given upon full payment of the purchase price.

Leasehold

- The Lease Price shall not be less than the listed Minimum Bid price.
- An up-front payment of five percent (5%) of the Lease Price must be paid upon award by cash, cashier's check or credit card (Visa or Mastercard).
- The balance of the Lease Price shall accrue interest at five percent (5%) per annum.
- Monthly payments of the Lease will be considered rental payments only and not installments toward purchase and shall not grant the lessee any equity or ownership interest in the property or be construed in any way to encumber CDA's rights, title and interest in the property beyond the granting of a lease for a specific term of years.
- Maximum acceptable Lease term shall be fifteen (15) years or 180 months.
- A lease agreement will be given upon receipt of the up-front payment and shall include:
 - No alterations or improvements without the prior written consent of CDA.
 - Lessee to insure property and improvements during the Lease term.
 - Lessee responsible for all utilities and other charges associated with the property.
 - Lease not to be assigned or mortgaged without prior written consent of CDA.
 - Failure to make a monthly payment grounds for termination and eviction.
 - Lease may, at the request of lessee, contain an Option to Purchase provision exercisable upon: (i) payment in full of the Lease Price; (ii) the Lease not having been declared to be in default; and (iii) payment of \$100.00 option consideration. If the option is properly exercised, a quitclaim deed will be given.

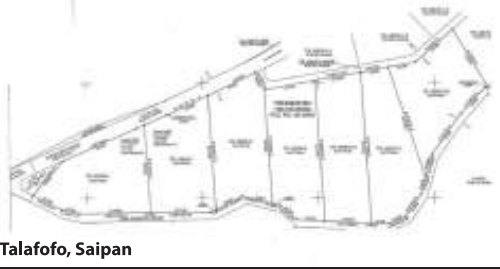
Fee Simple & Leasehold

- Interested bidders and buyers are cautioned to inspect the title and property. The interests of CDA in the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real property or improvements or any related documents will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer or lessee.
- CDA reserves the following rights:
 - To withdraw any or all of the listed properties before sale or lease or before a bid for such property is accepted, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
 - To reject any and all bids or proposals.

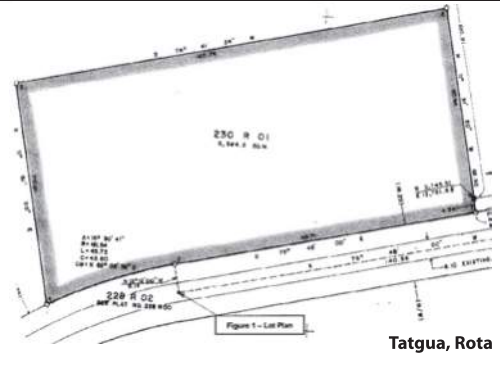
Interested parties or persons may contact Oscar C. Camacho, CDA Loan Manager, at 234-6245 ext. 306 for further information or to inspect properties, appraisals or photos.

All bids and offers for lease or purchase must be submitted to CDA in a sealed envelope marked "FORECLOSED PROPERTY SALE" no later than **10:00 am, Thursday, March 29, 2012**. The bids and offers will be opened and evaluated by CDA's Comptroller with recommendations being made to CDA's Executive Director for final decision. In the event of competing bids or offers, CDA reserves its sole right to determine which bid or offer is most advantageous to CDA. Price, fee simple vs. leasehold, term and up-front payment are all factors to be considered.

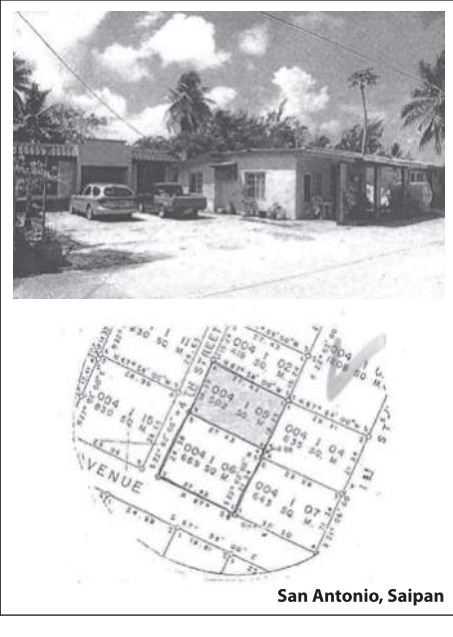
The acceptance or selection of any bids or offers will be announced on **Friday, March 30, 2012 at 2:00 pm** at CDA's Conference Room, Gualo Rai, Saipan.



Talafofo, Saipan



Tatgua, Rota



San Antonio, Saipan

MINA wants to promote conservation of Managaha



CLARISSA V. DAVID
Mariana Islands Nature Alliance project manager Frank Villagomez gestures as he talks about the non-profit organization's Managaha Marine Conservation Area project during the Saipan Rotary Club general membership meeting yesterday.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

There have not been any community based efforts to promote the conservation of the Managaha area, according to Mariana Islands Nature Alliance's Frank C. Villagomez.

In 2000, Managaha and its surrounding waters were declared a marine conservation area through Public Law 12-12 or the Managaha Marine Conservation Act.

"It is my hope that we educate the community about the Managaha Marine Conservation Act," said Villagomez during his presentation at the Rotary Club of Saipan meeting at the Hyatt Regency Saipan yesterday.

Villagomez said MINA, a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of the diverse natural resources of the Northern Mariana Islands, will be spearheading a project aimed

at educating the public about the Managaha marine conservation area which considers this small island as a marine-protected, no-take area.

He said the project aims to promote sustainable approaches and behavior within the Managaha marine conservation area and strengthen the function of the law protecting the said area.

Villagomez disclosed that last Saturday, he went to Managaha to educate the Saipan Seventh-Day Adventist School students who were not aware of the rules governing marine protected areas and where these areas are.

He said they plan to collect valuable information in the Managaha conservation area through beach profiling, fish surveys, coral bleaching, and water quality collection, among others, to help

improve their coral reef management strategies.

Villagomez said that for this project, they plan to work with community members, including boaters, jet-skiers, windsurfers, fishermen, divers, and picnickers, as well as tour agencies and operators who can work on educating CNMI's off-island visitors.

He encouraged the public to volunteer for the project to learn and understand the issue and "make positive changes" to their behavior to achieve the ultimate goal of protecting the Managaha and other marine conservation areas in the Commonwealth.

For more information, contact Villagomez at 233-REEF (7333) or email fcwillagomez@gmail.com.

Texas Rotarian visits Saipan

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A member of the Plano Rotary Club from Texas is visiting Saipan for the second time.

Rick Horne, program manager for the ITSI Gilbane Company, arrived on island on official business last Thursday.

Horne presented the Plano Rotary Club flag to Saipan Rotary Club president Pete Igitol during a general membership meeting at Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's Restaurant yesterday.

Horne said Plano Rotary Club has a diverse membership of over a hundred individuals, mostly business leaders and

politicians, from the city located in the northern part of Texas.

He said the Plano Rotary Club believes in and fulfills the Rotary International mission—to provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through its fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders—by endorsing non-profit organizations within their community.

"We give a lot of our heart, time, and resources to make sure that these non-profits continue to serve the interest of the public," added Horne.

Horne is scheduled to fly back to Texas on Sunday.

Tinian mayor wants incentive for saving

Tinian Mayor Ramon M. Dela Cruz has asked Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to give their island an incentive after coming in within their fiscal year 2011 budget.

"We never went over and beyond the budget that they gave us," Dela Cruz said Friday.

Dela Cruz said the money they saved from 2011 should be carried over to the succeeding fiscal years.

According to Dela Cruz, the

Tinian municipality already submitted their 2013 budget proposal to the governor's office.

While he refused to disclose the proposed budget, Dela Cruz noted that proposed budget reflects a "very slight increase" compared to that of 2012, which was at \$3 million according to *Saipan Tribune* files.

Dela Cruz said the increase is somewhere between 4 to 5 percent. *(Clarissa V. David)*

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board hereby gives notice that there will be a Regular Board Meeting on Friday, March 16, 2012 at 1:00 p.m. at the Mayor's Office Conference Room, 1st Floor, in San Jose Village, Tinian.

AGENDA

- I. Preliminary**
 - Call to Order
 - Roll Call
 - Adoption of Agenda
 - Adoption of Minutes
 - 01/13/2012 Regular Board Meeting
 - 01/18/2012 Regular Board Meeting
 - 02/03/2012 Regular Board Meeting
 - 02/24/2012 Regular Board Meeting
 - 03/02/2012 Regular Board Meeting
- II. Public Comments¹**
- III. Executive Session²**
- IV. Unfinished Business**
- V. New Business**
 - Review and Adoption of Scholarship Applications
 - Determination of Disbursement of the Spring 2012 Semester Awards
 - Memorandum of Agreement Revision
- VI. Miscellaneous Matters**
- VII. Discussion of Agenda for Next Board meeting**
- VIII. Adjournment**

/s/ ERIC C. SAN NICOLAS
Chairman

¹ We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
² Pursuant to 1 CMC§ 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

Strategic science plan for marine monument in the works

»Stakeholders meeting on Tinian today and on Saipan tomorrow

Eric Breuer, the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center Monument science coordinator for the National Marine Fisheries Service, is visiting the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam over the next two weeks to gain input from fishermen, scientists, natural resource agency officials, and the general public toward the development of a Strategic Science Plan that will guide future scientific research in the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument.

Breuer leads science coordination in the Pacific Remote, Rose Atoll, and Marianas Trench Marine National Monuments. Stationed in Honolulu, Hawaii, he works closely with local NMFS PIFSC staff Michael Trianni, who works out of the CNMI NOAA Field Office in south Garapan, as well as Eric Cruz from the NMFS PIFSC Field

Office in Guam.

The objective of the Strategic Science Plan is to address national, local, and regional science needs in the marine monument, toward the goal of fulfilling the aspirations of the presidential proclamation that created it.

By identifying and including scientific research needs in the early stages of development, the Strategic Science Plan will prioritize projects for currently available and potentially future available project funding.

A major element to the effort is to be as transparent as possible. Likewise the team has a goal to include all potential parties who may have an interest in the science plan's development to be involved with its development.

In addition to scheduling a series of meetings with agencies and individuals, Breuer will conduct two public stakeholder forums, one today, March 14, at the Fleming Hotel function room on Tinian. The second is on Thursday, March 15, at the American Memorial Park auditorium on Saipan. Both events begin at 6pm. Due to flight difficulties, a planned visit to Rota had to be postponed. A follow up visit by science plan officials will be scheduled for Rota shortly.

The consultations and work efforts of Trianni, Cruz, and Breuer represent important milestones in the overall plans of this national marine monument's overall management plan. For more information, contact Trianni at (670) 285-0014, or via email at michael.trianni@noaa.gov and Cruz at (671) 737-0801, or via email at eric.cruz@noaa.gov. (PR)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

General farmers meeting today

This is to inform all farmers that the Department of Lands and Natural Resources will be hosting a general farmers meeting for election of new administrators for the Saipan and Northern Islands Soil and Water Conservation District. The meeting will be held at the Kagman Division of Agriculture station on Wednesday, March 14, 2012, from 10am to 11:30am. The term of office for the new administrators is from fiscal year 2012 to 2015. For more information or any concerns, call 256-3319 and ask for Diana Gabaldon. (PR)

Casting call for FOA play

Friends of the Arts' last play of the year is coming up! The Anthony Shaffer mystery, *Sleuth*, will be performed on April 27, 28, and 29. Here is your chance to be on the stage as part of this production. Auditions will take place this Wednesday, March 14, at 6pm to 8pm, at the Dolphin Theater, Building T, at Marianas High School. The play has five parts, two male leads, and three male secondary or two male secondary and one female secondary roles. The roles require a range in ages from 18 to the 60s. The two male leads will be one older and one younger. Come to the auditions and try out. If you have never been in an FOA play—that's great—come in and make this your first. Previous FOA cast members are also invited. (PR)

Parent Literacy Night next week at KHS

All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend the Parent Literacy Night at the Kagman High School's cafeteria! This is mandatory for students who failed 1 or more courses this year.

- March 27 for freshmen at 5pm
- March 28 for sophomore and juniors at 5pm
- March 29 for seniors at 5pm

Light refreshments and free raffle! For more information call KHS main office at 237-3907 or e-mail: kagmanhs@gmail.com. (PR)

NEW

GRADUATES

Graduates of the Basic Computer Operations 2 have their picture taken with Philippine Overseas Labor Office officer-in-charge Julia Fabian, OWWA staff Tonette Ocon, instructor Jousel Regilme and panelists Mar Masilungan, Zaldy Quebral, Edmin Elayda and Mildred Pabilando on Saturday, March 10, 2012, at the Marianas Business Plaza.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Impaired Driving Prevention Campaign

March 12 – 18, 2012

LUCK WON'T KEEP YOU OUT OF A JAM
THIS ST. PATRICK'S DAY.



Department of Public Safety
For more information call 664-9084/85



Pew congratulates Guam on shark leadership

»Pew encourages region's chief executives to complete protections

GUAM—During the 17th Micronesian Chief Executives Summit, held in the village of Tamuning this week, representatives from the Pew Environment Group congratulated Guam leaders on the one-year anniversary of the signing of Public Law 31-10, which prohibits the possession, sale, and trade of shark fins, rays, and ray parts.

“Guam was only the third place in the world to fully ban the shark fin trade, helping to build global momentum to reduce human impact on these animals,” said Matt Rand, director of global shark conservation at the Pew Environment Group. “In the year since Gov. Eddie Calvo signed this law, shark protections have spread to other parts of the Pacific, as well as to the West Coast of the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and Central America.”

Two regional agreements were forged last summer. In June, the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures passed a resolution calling for additional measures to safeguard sharks. In July, attendees at the



Students in Guam celebrate and raise awareness for the one-year anniversary of the Guam Shark Law, and call on FSM to complete the Micronesia Regional Shark Sanctuary.

Micronesian Chief Executives Summit approved a measure for the parties to establish a first-ever shark sanctuary that would encompass the waters of Palau, the Marshall Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States

of Micronesia, and its four member states, Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae.

“The Marshall Islands created the world’s largest shark sanctuary in September. Coupled with Palau’s sanctuary, leaders in Micronesia are

quickly fulfilling their commitment to protect these magnificent animals in their waters,” said Rand. “Micronesia now has the opportunity to pass similar measures and deliver on the promise of a regional shark sanctuary.” (Pew)

Mobil Oil donates \$1,000 to MMAC

Mobil Oil has been named the latest major sponsor of the 2012 Marianas March Against Cancer, joining a growing list of corporations supporting the largest annual cancer fundraising event in the Northern Mariana Islands. Major sponsorship is conferred on companies that donate \$1,000-\$2,999 in cash or services. “The 2012 Marianas March Against Cancer committee is extremely grateful to the staff and management of Mobil Oil for their gener-

ous support in the fight against cancer. Their \$1,000 donation is deeply appreciated,” said 2012 MMAC overall committee chair Catherine Attao-Toves.

The Marianas March Against Cancer is the signature fundraising activity of the Commonwealth Cancer Association, a volunteer-led non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that ensures all funds raised are spent entirely in the CNMI on cancer patient support services, cancer aware-

ness programs and other cancer-related activities.

“We currently have 14 teams selling luminaries, raffle tickets, and other items so please contact them if you wish to support the fight against cancer. Our 14 teams are 302nd F.R.G., Ahu, ALAI/Saipan Community School, Aschoscho, Bodig, #FREEDAVE, IT&E/Saipan Southern High School, Joeten/Marianas High School, Marriage Encoun-

ter, NMPASI, Pacific Islands Club, Saipan Health Clinic/St. Jude Renal Care Facility, Take Care/Grace Christian Academy and Tan Holdings/Kagman High School,” said Attao-Toves.

The 2012 Marianas March Against Cancer will be held on April 27-28 from 6pm to 6am at the Hopwood Junior High School in Chalan Piao. For more information call 285-1828, email attao@yahoo.com or visit www.ccamarianas.org. (MMAC)

NAVFAC Pacific sets industry and energy conference

PEARL HARBOR—Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific is co-sponsoring the 2012 Industry and Energy Conference March 26-27 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Coral Ballroom, Honolulu, Hawaii.

“NAVFAC Pacific is thrilled to host its first Industry and Energy Conference later this month,” said NAVFAC Pacific Vice Commander Capt. Pete Lynch. “The conference will provide a

great opportunity for the Hawaii business community to actively engage and participate in discussions with the NAVFAC Pacific Leadership, to include the leadership from the NAVFAC Engineering Commands, or FEC in Hawaii, Guam, and the Far East. We anticipate that the presentations will be informative and interactive.”

The two-day Industry and Energy Conference will provide an

opportunity to promote robust discussion among NAVFAC Pacific, innovators in energy technology, and private lending and venture capital providers to enhance services and support critical to the NAVFAC Pacific mission. The conference will also offer interactive sessions on workload forecasts, policy changes, performance standards, process compliance, facility development, and energy

initiatives within the NAVFAC Pacific area of responsibility.

“We are looking forward to this event and are anxious to enhance our dialogue with our industry leaders in the Pacific Area,” said Lynch. “We encourage your attendance to hear about the updated developments and new initiatives this year.”

The conference begins promptly at 8am. More information about the event and how to register for it can be found at www.acechawaii.org/cde.cfm?event=378668. (USN)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Mar. 14, 2000

Hillblom heirs settle \$1.5M claims

The heirs of the late business tycoon Larry Hillblom have settled claims of a lawyer suing for arbitration and bad faith litigation, agreeing to pay him and his clients over \$1.5 million. Junior Larry Hillbloom, his guardian Naoko Imeong, Milagros Feliciano, her mother Mercedesita; and their lawyers reached the settlement agreement with James E. Hollman, who is guardian to claimant Vo Minh Tan, according to the U.S. District Court. Federal Judge Alex R. Munson approved the deal yesterday, but ordered to keep the settlement reached with Junior Larry under seal.

CRM opposes proposal on hotels' 'exclusive rights'

The Coastal Resources Management has opposed the passage of a proposed measure which would allow the hotels to have “exclusive rights” to their beachfront. In a letter to the Rep. Dino Jones, chair of the House Committee on Natural Resources, CRM acting Director Peter J. Barlas said all activities within the “beachfront property” zone fall under the jurisdiction of his agency. “All activities in this zone will require a CRM permit, hence, no development rights may be inferred or granted with any lease,” said Mr. Barlas. Currently, all hotels are under the supervision of CRM since all the permits granted to these establishments were given conditions in their permits requiring them to maintain the shoreline and dispose of trash and refuse everyday.

Mar. 14, 2001

CUC stands pat on disconnection order

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has reiterated that power supply in all government offices on Tinian and Rota will remain disconnected unless payments are made. This came in a form of a directive addressed to utility officials on Tinian and Rota, who were reminded that CUC regulations require that payments should be made before any service is restored. As a result of this directive, government operations on Rota and Tinian remain interrupted until yesterday despite commitments made by the finance department to set aside \$800,000 monthly flat-rate utility payments.

New Taiwan scholarship fund for Pacific students

Pacific Islands students are to benefit from a new scholarship scheme funded by Taiwan/ROC later this year, following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding today at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in Suva. “This scholarship scheme recognizes the important role of education,” said the Secretary General of the Forum Secretariat, Mr. Noel Levi, CBE, during the brief ceremony. Mr. Levi told the head of Taiwan/ROC’s trade office in Fiji, Mr. C.K. Ning, that the scholarship scheme would benefit the region by enhancing its ability to meet the challenges of modern life.

Mar. 14, 2002

Ada: CARPI fund issue not decided yet

Rep. Martin B. Ada strongly denied a news report (not Saipan Tribune), which quoted him as saying that members of the Commonwealth Association of Retired Persons Inc. cannot sit on the NMI Retirement Fund’s Board of Trustees. Ada, who is chairman of the House Committee on Judicial and Government Operations, said the panel has no specific position yet on the matter as House Bills 13-28 and 13-18 have both been tabled by the committee and are still under review. House Bill 13-28, authored by Rep. Andrew S. Salas, seeks to reserve one seat in the seven-member Board of Trustees for the CARPI, while House Bill 13-18, introduced by House Floor Leader Jesus T. Attao, aims to increase the number of Board seats to eight to accommodate a CARPI appointee.

Embezzling lands ex-director in jail

A former Labor and Immigration director was sentenced Tuesday to three months imprisonment, after he pleaded guilty before the US District Court to having used government resources in placing overseas personal phone calls amounting to over \$16,000 between 1998 to 2000. Chief Judge Alex R. Munson, during a sentencing hearing, further ordered former DOLI-Tinian resident director Antonio Boki Evangelista, 39, to pay \$19,683.96 in restitution to the Division of Revenue and Taxation. As part of his sentence, the defendant will undergo three years of supervised release. Last August 2001, Evangelista, aided by court-appointed counsel Brien Sers Nicolas, agreed with the U.S. Attorney’s Office to enter a guilty plea on one count of “theft concerning programs receiving federal funds.”

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy first birthday to Kaeden Jay Marquez Togawa! Wishing you all the world’s best on your special day! May God bless you with many more happy and healthy years to come! We love you so much and thank the Lord with your presence every day! Greetings come from Mommy, Daddy, and Aundre.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated happy birthday to Andrea Nicole C. Mammauag, who celebrated her 10th birthday last Sunday, March 11, at the Shirley’s Coffee Shop Susupe. Mammauag’s actual birthday was March 12.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 7th birthday to Brandie Alexis Matsumoto, who is celebrating her special day today! Wishing you all the happiness that life can bring. God bless and we love you! Greetings come from the family.

Happy birthday greetings go out to John Reyes Jr., who is celebrating his birthday today, March 14. May the Lord fill your life with many, many blessings! Your family loves you! Greetings come from your three boys: JD, Dondon, Coby, and Roy Jr., Draven Franko, and the Benavente family.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Islands Snapshots



ROMNEY VISIT

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's son, Matt, shakes hands with traditional warrior dance group members at a luncheon hosted Friday by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial at his private residence in Gualo Rai. Matt Romney is joined by his wife Laurie.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Laurie Romney, left, and husband Matt Romney, son of Republican presidential bet Mitt Romney, chat with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and first lady Josie Fitial at the governor's residence on Friday.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Matt Romney, left, and his wife Laurie are presented with head mwarms upon their arrival at Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's, right, mansion in Gualo Rai on Friday for a luncheon that the governor hosted for Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's son and daughter in law. Fitial endorsed Mitt Romney, who picked up nine delegates from the CNMI.



GOP CAUCUS

▲ Kodep Ogumoro-Uludong, left, assists in the registration of voters during Saturday's Republican caucus won by Mitt Romney, who picked up nine delegates from the CNMI.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

◀ Registered Republicans cast their vote at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan during Saturday's Republican caucus won by Mitt Romney, who picked up nine delegate from the CNMI for the national convention in Florida in August.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MATH CLUB
Tinian Jr. Sr. High School has just established their first Math Club. Seen here are the officers and finding members of the club: From left, Christopher Famaw, co-president; Alison Cruz, co-secretary; Veronica Borja, co-treasurer; Elizabeth Hofschneider, adviser; Kavika Knutson, co-treasurer; Crystal Borja, co-vice president; and Delfin Biz, co-vice president. Not seen in the photo is Myrese Cruz, co-president, and No-elanie Santos, co-secretary.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MONTHLY CLEANUP

Volunteers of PDM Promoters Inc. clear trash from the drainage in Garapan last Saturday.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Awaodori Team members Cody Liturumal and ltheyvin They rake dried leaves and other trash along Beach Road on Saturday.

Opinion

Hafa Adail

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Plenty of time to let diplomacy and sanctions work on Iran

Despite the demonstration in Iraq and Afghanistan that there are limits to what military might can accomplish, there remains a seductive gung-ho streak in the American body politic.

It was on display last week as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Washington, D.C., and as Republican presidential candidates toured primary states, offering simplistic military solutions for complex problems.

Netanyahu wanted assurances that the United States would back Israel if it decides to attack Iranian nuclear sites. The Israeli air force is not believed to have the necessary long-range strike capability, so the United States would have to be a full partner.

President Barack Obama assured Netanyahu that "all options are on the table," and that the prospect of an Iranian bomb remains "unacceptable." But the president also said there was too much "loose talk" of war.

He got that right. U.S. intelligence agencies are not fully convinced Iran is working on a bomb. Some analysts argue that Iran would be no more likely to use such a weapon—or give one to a terrorist group—than any other nuclear nation. Nuclear weapons leave particle evidence that pinpoint where their plutonium comes from.

Despite the mad rhetoric of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran is not suicidal. Ahmadinejad is now out of favor with Iran's supreme leader, the Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who last week welcomed Obama's statement that a diplomatic "window of opportunity" exists to deal with the issue.

Economic sanctions are beginning to pinch Iran. Patience and diplomacy have not been exhausted.

Speak not of diplomacy on the Republican campaign trail. Except for the isolationist Rep. Ron Paul of Texas, the remaining candidates are employing Ahmadinejadian-style rhetoric.

On Friday, GOP frontrunner Mitt Romney was asked in a radio interview whether he'd support a first strike on Iran by a U.S.-Israel coalition. "Yes, and I think you actually have to act before they had a weapon, a deliverable weapon. They have to understand that we will take military, kinetic action if they continue to pursue a nuclear option."

Earlier in the week, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, whose campaign is on life support funded by hawkish pro-Israel billionaire Sheldon Adelson, said that if Israel decides to attack, "I wouldn't give this (Obama) administration one minute's notice, because someone will leak it."

Not to be outflanked, Rick Santorum mocked Gen. Martin Dempsey's assertion that the United States is not convinced Iran is building a bomb. Gen. Dempsey is chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mr. Santorum is a former senator from Pennsylvania. Who knows better?

"If they do not tear down those facilities, we will tear them down ourselves," Mr. Santorum said, adding, "This is not bellicosity and warmongering."

No? Well, it's not particularly presidential, either. In the real world, things are complicated. The United States has been to war too often, losing too many lives and spending too much treasure without knowing why we got in or how we get out.

There may someday be a case for intervention in Iran. Sooner than that there may be a case for intervention in Syria. But as a last resort, not the first one.

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THIS WEEK ON "THE MITTS OF HAZZARD."

The moving finger writes

...and having writ, moves on. Ah, but not so graciously. Our winter vacation has officially come to an end in northeast China with the official advent of spring, and we thought our writing came to an end as well. Yet, the rain in Spain is no longer just in the plain, Tennessee's tornadoes and torrential rains are terribly getting out of hand, the sandstorms of the steppe in our Saharan Asia are blinding the unfolded eyelids of Mongolians, but the green in spring sprouting in Liaoning is not doing so on cue.

Just when we thought that the Chinese calendar might know something we didn't, in that as soon as students started arriving on campus for spring semester (Western calendars make that turn on March 19), the sun came out resplendent and warm, melting all the remaining snow on the ground. The boys, with raucous voices and cutoffs—already into March Madness and oblivious to the Siberian winds—started frolicking under the basketball hoops like it was summertime play. Someone started playing with the heavenly switches. We joined the rest of the world wondering what Moqin (mother) nature was up to.

We woke up in the middle of the week with a fresh blanket of 4-inch snow on the ground, a whole day of winter fog, with temperatures plunging 15 degrees south in the early morn, ascending into heights of similar distance midday, and then nose-diving back to the freezer at sundown. Those of us of with labored respiratory constitution and weakened-knee condition, particularly the aging elders to which I now count myself, sought comfort under the covers.

That, or wrap the woolen blanket around the shoulder, stay close to the radiator, drag the cramping hind thigh into any sun rays that filter through the window, and hack our thoughts on the LCD just one more time.

We were in the Nippongo world of solemn 3.11 anniversary observance the other day and since I alluded to the twin towers of NYC's own 9.11, a colleague reminded me to add just one more memorable eleven, the 26.11 in India in 2008 when a city came under high-profile suicidal attacks in what is now known as the Massacre of Mumbai. Ah, but the scent of death permeates the air.

Our title and opening line comes from Edward Fitzgerald's 19th century rendering of the ancient Persian mathematician and poet's quatrains titled the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. Fitzgerald is often accused of taking liberties with his translation of the 11th century Persian lines but his renditions flow like Caribbean molasses on a summer day. We still savor our long-ago quoting of lines livening up many youthful downing and drowning into the cup and brew, even after our lips no longer recall the soft sidling of adoring freshie LitMajors at the Student Union.

We remember Omar Khayyam's alleged stoicism and poetic statements of the objective irreversible movements of time and events, as we muse over the indeterminate nature of natural and human-induced disasters in our surroundings and internal consciousness, yet we dare to celebrate our day even as we now take federal effort to bend and lace

By JAIME VERGARA

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergara2031@aol.com) is a former PSS teacher and is currently writing from the campus of Shenyang Aerospace University in China.



our shoes. Old age does not take too kindly to the receding sunset of our years, but the sun, nonetheless, still shines in its decline.

Down the hall from us here at the Shenyang Aerospace University is an Irani PhD student working on finding ways to keep the burning of coal clean (an oxymoron by definition since coal burning is never clean!) but he is hardly known for his major study. He is often asked his views on the use of nuclear fission in Iran that is now the object of Western schizomania. A U.S. general was recently quoted as suggesting that Iran would be a perfect target for the United States to test its weapons, even if it means obliterating the whole civilization from the surface of the Earth!

This civilization that hosted caravans on the Silk Road, who first gave the people east of them the designation as "the people of the Qin (Chin)" which Marco Polo popularized in Europe and the French labeling them "Chine," thus our current designation of "China"; these folks who gave us Zoroaster and the humble image of the three Magi at the lowly manger, has become the object of our vilification because they bother to ensure their energy supply beyond the gush of oil that (starting with the British empire, momentarily derailed in the disgrace of the last Shah and surreptitiously still flowed in our pipelines) we have exploited to light up our night skies and power our combustion engines.

With eternal gratitude for the gifts of the Judeo-Christian wisdom of my upbringing, we feign no admiration to hawkish Israel's brandishing its hypocrisy with its own stowed uranium-laced thunder, decrying the access of a technology it had long harbored and used to blackmail its way into muscling Gaza and the West Bank, abetted by the prejudice of people who find discomfort from folks who call their supreme allegiance, "Allah"! Puhleezeze!

Still, the moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on. In the winter that is breaking into spring, the laughter of youth and the bright searching eyes of innocence nosing its way to the Holy Grail of knowledge and the illusory assurances of onion-skin diplomas, as the world turns, we do, indeed, move on.

Singularly, we do so with only one concern: How shall the future generation live?

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Hasty decision on Romney

The local GOP was quick throwing its endorsement behind Governor Mitt Romney, the frontrunner among national GOP presidential bets. Such decision was celebrated with seemingly irrational exuberance as though Romney is now the presumptive GOP presidential candidate.

Yes, Romney may be ahead of the group but “he has not demonstrated the ability to win a race without vastly outspending his opponents, often by 5-to-1 and even 12-to-1. He will not enjoy this luxury against the sitting president and the billion-dollar Obama machine,” according to Dr. Milton R. Wolf, a Washington Times columnist and a cousin of President Obama.

Wolf says Republicans are “fooling themselves” if they ignore this sobering reality. Said he: “Mr. Gingrich forced President Obama into an astonishing game of chess. In a 30-minute video titled ‘\$2.50 per Gallon Gasoline, Energy Independence and Jobs,’ Mr. Gingrich unveiled his vision for renewed American prosperity centered on oil and natural gas production. He demonstrated his unparalleled insight into the intersection of energy, security and prosperity. Mr. Gingrich rightly declared that never again should an American president bow before a Saudi king. Meanwhile, Mr. Obama, stung by his recent half-billion-dollar failed Solyndra boondoggle, began floating his latest green fantasy of harvesting algae to cure the pain at the pump.

“Panicked by Mr. Gingrich, Mr. Obama was forced off his game and repeatedly tried to respond, only making matters worse for himself. He stayed true to the Democrats’ anti-energy agenda and mocked Republicans for wanting to drill for new oil. This made the president the butt of a joke for Jay Leno on The Tonight Show: Democrats claim that new drilling for oil won’t help us for at least 10 years, but haven’t they been saying that now for more than 10 years?

“Mr. Obama boasts that oil production is up under his administration. True, but only because the president hasn’t yet stopped production on privately owned land. Mr. Gingrich cut right through his profound dishonesty: ‘Under President Obama, because he is so anti-American-energy, we have actually had a 40-percent reduction in development of oil offshore, and we have had a 40-percent reduction in the development of oil on federal lands.’”

Mr. Gingrich reduced Obama’s once-confident “Yes, we can!” 2008 version into the backpedaling, “It’s not my fault” 2012 ver-

sion right before our eyes. A defensive Mr. Obama dissembled: “We know there’s no silver bullet that will bring down gas prices or reduce our dependence on foreign oil overnight.” Wait, what about that algae? Newt had Barack right where he wanted him.

With this, Peter Ferrara, former adviser to President Reagan, declared that Mr. Obama had just lost his first debate. The GOP race remains open. “So ask yourself this: Which Republican candidate beside Newt Gingrich has demonstrated the ability to make Barack Obama squirm?”

As NMI heads into bankruptcy

For many who earned their stripes after the war, ’50s, ’60s and ’70s, we were loaded with enthusiasm and optimism that hard work leads to freedom and prosperity. It’s traditional teaching at its best. I am sure the same troops never imagined the archipelago sinking into its chaotic or apocalyptic lowest today as a result of negligence and arrogance from within and without.

During the incipient years of the new political relationship, we boldly ventured into undertakings, greenish or neophytes as we may be, convinced that being proactive was the fitting approach to doing things right. We believed in helping development move along so we would have sufficiency in dealing with our needs that increase annually by leaps and bounds. Somehow, we dropped the ball and took a long snooze.

Then, nothing was to have gone wrong and not when there was a seven-year guaranteed funding from across the Pacific Divide. These funds were intended to help the CNMI prepare the strong pillars and lasting economic foundation of the Marianas Archipelago that would only require intermittent or occasional refinements.

But I don’t recall having seen a set of socio-economic plans prepared by leadership for implementation. If we did, they must have been scrapped or trashed by politicians who prefer ad hoc planning versus fully thought out plans. They’re more attuned to planning BY eventualities versus planning FOR them in advance.

The absence of a plan is a tale and complete depiction today of what happens when we do things on an ad hoc basis. We’ve cushioned the mañana syndrome by conveniently burying our heads in the sand to avoid studying, understanding, articulating, and implementing an orderly plan. Such a plan was needed to guard the wealth

the 55-year lease term that an NMD leased to a non-NMD. It does not make them lose their culture because they are leasing their apartments from non-NMDs. One’s culture or identity is not lost because one does not occupy the land that their parents or grandparents once owned but voluntarily sold or leased. Furthermore, the idea that NMDs do not want their landlords or neighbors to be Koreans, Filipinos, Chinese, Italians, Palauans, etc., is racist at best and has nothing to do with the protection of culture. There are plenty of NMDs who are neighbors with non-NMDs and are co-existing well, many even embracing each other’s cultures through marriage.

The idea of being exclusive in a multi-cultural community is not conducive to racial harmony. We should be inclusive and give anyone who makes the CNMI home the right to landownership.

Since keeping Article 12 allows for 55-year lease terms, does this mean that the 55-year lease term protects NMDs from losing their culture and attachment to their land? A 55-year-old landowner who leases his land for 55 years will be 110 years old (dead) before he gets back his land. So proponents will say, his children will benefit from the land. His children will still have to wait for 55 years before they could have any say on their land. It will more likely benefit his grandchildren who hopefully still fit the definition of NMD and are qualified to own land, otherwise still no land for this family. Without Article 12, it wouldn’t matter whether his grandchildren meets the definition of NMD, they would own the land. Does this mean that after the 55-year term expires, the non-NMDs’ culture will prevail while NMDs’ culture will disappear? Of course not.

Have the Chuukese, Marshallese, Koreans, Filipinos, Japanese, Samoans residing within the Commonwealth lost their culture because they cannot own land? Of course not. Their cultures are still intact. Their customs remain the same and NMDs are living with them in harmony. It is the lifestyle of the CNMI that has changed. Change is inevitable. We are Americans. We have joined the American family. American society is a melting pot of cultures from around the world. We chose to be Americans. Our children could be at any place within the U.S. jurisdiction but that doesn’t mean they have

By **JOHN DELROSARIO**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.



that descended on these isles during its economically healthier days when the CNMI was thriving in both apparel manufacturing and tourism. We thought “those days” would be around forever. Well, they’re gone! And, yes, they’re gone for good, too!

The 2011 fiscal year budget decreased substantially to \$103 million. Over the years we’ve seen this budget take a downward spiral from some \$256 million annually to a meager \$103 million. Prospects of this figure ballooning are very slim. In fact, given the persistent closure of more businesses, therefore, revenue streams going south, confidence of finding more money has thinned out significantly too. It would exact bankruptcy to the hilt.

So where do we find more money to pay off debts to the Fund of more than \$300 million, the power needs of PSS and CHC, critical medical cases, and some breaks in the prohibitive cost of utilities, gasoline at the pumps, price of goods and other shocks families had to endure these days? I have no answers either but I equally quiz: What’s next? Will it be more work hour reduction or reduction in force in the back burner for implementation soon?

Certainly, a reduction in force is difficult given the contraction of private industries. They are steadily putting up shutters. So where would you place employees who are victims of a reduction in force? There are no opportunities up that alley either, is there? I call the impending situation dystopia, meaning, where nothing works. It is the furthest of my dreams but the magma of apocalyptic hardship is steadily moving our way and will see it devour our livelihood in our presence. Our people are now watching their future at the brink of complete collapse, disaster, or both.

lost their culture regardless whether they own land or not. Moreover, if the family does own land and the next generation marries outside the NMD definition for their children to not qualify, where is the protection there of land that the family legitimately owns and *chooses* not to sell to keep in the family? One great-grandchild is disqualified while others are not. Do we want government dictating which among our children are worthy of their inheritance based on having a child with a non-NMD? It is time to abolish Article 12. Article 12 does nothing to preserve our cultural identity. As a matter of fact, it will reach the point when it hinders us, because of irrational bright line rules restricting ownership within our own families for families who chose to keep their land but can’t pass it on due to intermarriage.

We are only a couple or even one (for some) generation away right now from isolating *our own* families from owning *our own* land on an island where they may have been born and raised, embracing Chamorro and/or Carolinian culture. The truth is, in the future, it is our own children and our culture that we are killing by not allowing them to own land due to keeping Article 12, disqualifying them from owning land. Remember that NMD is what is defined in the law; a person could be 100-percent Chamorro, but only 50-percent NMD by definition, because one parent is from Guam. If that person has a child with another Chamorro from Guam, that child is now 100-percent Chamorro, but only 25-percent NMD and one generation away from not being able to own land under Article 12. Think about this and look within your own family and your children. You may be the most Chamorro or Carolinian cultured person ever born and raised in the CNMI, but not qualify to meet the definition of NMD—this is an example of how Article 12 hinders culture and family, not protecting it. Article 12 must be abolished.

To be continued tomorrow.

Joseph Ito Pangelinan describes himself as 50-percent Northern Marianas descent by true blood but 100-percent NMD by definition.

Viewpoints

By **JOSEPH ITO PANGELINAN**
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

First of a three-part series

Editor’s Note: Due to the length of this submission, it will be published as a three-part series. The succeeding two columns will be published on Thursday and Friday.

I write this with the belief that both proponents and opponents can and should freely express their opinions respectfully and with open minds. This allows the public an opportunity to make an informed decision based on healthy debate of the issues and facts surrounding the question of whether to keep or abolish Article 12.

VIEWPOINT 1: We need Article 12 to protect the culture of Northern Marianas descents (NMD) and for our children’s future.

The argument that Carolinian and Chamorro culture is lost because you sell your land to a non-NMD is, quite frankly, absurd.

Culture is dynamic. It keeps adapting and changing as time goes on. The lifestyles of CNMI families have changed. It used to be that the majority were farmers or fishermen. It was a society with very few jobs. Land was necessary to grow crops or raise animals to barter, sell, or consume. Now our economy has changed. Excess land that is not being utilized remains idle as most families are wage earners in our present cash economy.






The idea that one’s culture or identity is lost because an NMD does not own a piece of real estate is a fallacy. Buying into this fallacy means you’re saying all NMDs who do not own land have lost their culture. How many of you NMDs out there do not own land? Do you agree that you now have no culture? Even if you do agree, has Article 12 given you land/culture? You’re still landless and if this occurred more recently, probably with less money than what you would have gotten without Article 12.

Another culture argument is the claim that NMDs will be tenants of non-NMDs if Article 12 is abolished. Whether we abolish or keep Article 12, NMDs are still tenants of non-NMDs from

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy during the day.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy during the day.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy during the day.
▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲ 85 ▼ 77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 85 ▼ 79
Yap	Showers	▲ 89 ▼ 78
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 90 ▼ 79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 80
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 80
Majuro	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 79

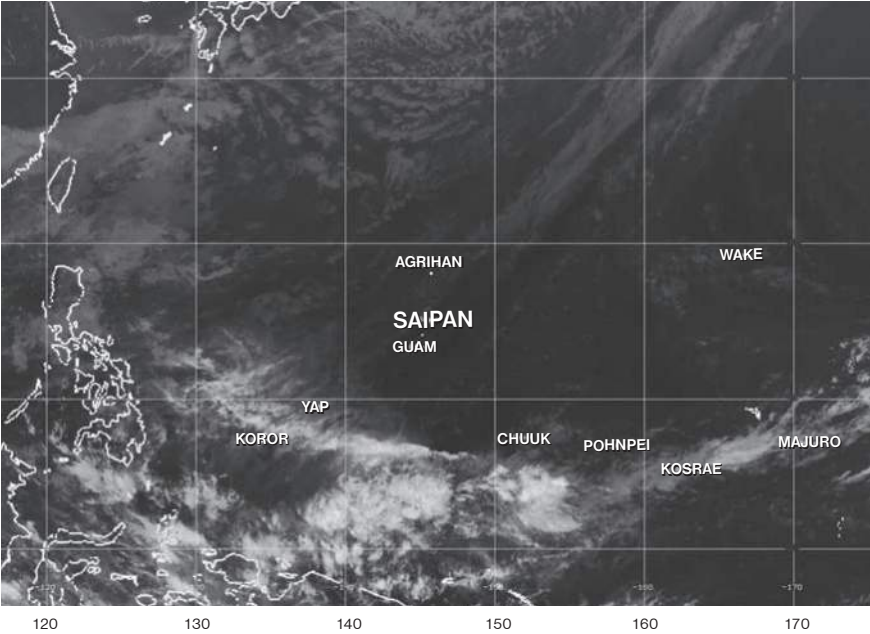
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲ 69 ▼ 58
Beijing	Showers	▲ 51 ▼ 25
Hong Kong	Showers	▲ 68 ▼ 61
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲ 79 ▼ 70
London	Sunny	▲ 65 ▼ 43
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲ 66 ▼ 53
Manila	Thundershowers	▲ 88 ▼ 80
Melbourne	Thundershowers	▲ 82 ▼ 64
Miami	Sunny	▲ 81 ▼ 69
New York	Sunny	▲ 67 ▼ 44
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲ 50 ▼ 35
Paris	Sunny	▲ 68 ▼ 40
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲ 50 ▼ 40
Rome	Sunny	▲ 70 ▼ 44
Salem	Rain	▲ 47 ▼ 45
San Francisco	Rain	▲ 57 ▼ 55
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲ 49 ▼ 28
Tokyo	Sunny	▲ 53 ▼ 35
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲ 75 ▼ 54

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
1:39 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
7:01 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
12:18 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
7:54 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front curves southwestward from 25N157E to 21N152E then continues as a shear line across the Northern CNMI to beyond 11N130E. Patchy clouds and scattered showers are found along and up to 150 miles northwest of this boundary. Low-level convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms near Kosrae but south of Koror, Yap, Chuuk and Pohnpei within 150 miles of a line from 1N135E to 6N166E. An upper-level trough curves southwestward from 20N180 through a circulation centered north of Kwajalein at 12N169E to end near 7N158E. Upper-level divergence east of the trough combined with trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers east of Majuro east of a line from 13N173E to 4N173E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:26 AM	6:27 PM
Thursday	6:25 AM	6:27 PM
Friday	6:24 AM	6:27 PM
Saturday	6:23 AM	6:27 PM
Sunday	6:23 AM	6:28 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:00 AM
Thursday	12:23 AM
Friday	1:19 AM
Saturday	2:12 AM
Sunday	3:00 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

- PICTURES**
 - ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
 - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- For pictures:**
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 - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) C05064 5:15am 5:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP) C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN) C05062 3:10am 3:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) C05064 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6 C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN C05062 2:10am 3:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05071 7:00am 7:50am Daily C05073 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05075 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:30pm 6:20pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:40pm 6:30pm 3, 6 C05079 8:35pm 9:25pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05079 8:45pm 9:35pm 3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL285 6:35am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7 DL297 4:25pm 7:15pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:40pm 1:15am+1 Daily DL286 7:40pm 12:20am+1 2, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ119 4:00am 11:20am Daily via KIX OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 Daily via KIX OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7 DL581 4:10am 7:30am 1, 5	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 2:20am+1 3, 6 DL580 10:10pm 2:55am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:40pm 1, 4, 7 via GUM C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 2, 5 via GUM-Palau OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN C05072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM C05072/PR111 10:05pm 7:50am+1 3, 6 via GUM	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN DL172/288 8:00am 1:15am+1 Daily via NRT C0190/5077 10:55am 6:30pm 3, 6 via GUM C0190/5079 10:55am 9:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/C05071 10:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM C0192/5071 10:25pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM-Palau C0184/5071 11:10pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ704/603 11:40pm 2:20pm Daily via ICN C0184/5071 11:59pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 12:00pm 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 12:00pm 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05076/147 3:10pm 10:25pm 1, 5 via GUM OZ604/723 3:20pm 10:30pm Daily via ICN OZ604/749 3:20pm 10:50pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ724/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ750/603 1:00am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN C0180/5071 11:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana	
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 100	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Business

United and FHB continue credit card program in 2012

»Credit card program to be rebranded under United's 'MileagePlus' name

GUAM—United Airlines, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of United Continental Holdings, Inc. said yesterday that First Hawaiian Bank and United will continue offering the existing credit card program in Guam, formerly known as the Continental Airlines OnePass credit card program, which will be represented by a new "MileagePlus" branded credit card.

The United MileagePlus credit card offers benefits including one mile rewarded for each dollar spent in net purchases, double miles on United ticket purchases, and no expiration or annual cap on miles earned, as long as there is activity in the account.

Applications for the new United MileagePlus credit card are available in all First Hawaiian Bank branches on Guam

and Saipan. Existing customers who have a Continental Airlines OnePass credit card from First Hawaiian Bank will have their cards replaced with the new United MileagePlus credit card during April and May 2012. There will be no disruption of service for these customers.

"We are pleased to announce that First Hawaiian Bank and United will continue to jointly

offer a credit card under United's MileagePlus brand. We are equally happy to continue working with First Hawaiian Bank in providing our customers with quality travel services on Guam," said Barry Bergmann, United's managing director of Micronesia and Southeast Asia. "Customers on Guam will be able to enjoy our expanded route network with United and

its partners in the Star Alliance, as well as have a choice to redeem accumulated miles for more than 1,185 destinations in 185 countries."

"First Hawaiian Bank is proud to welcome United Airlines to our valuable credit card program in Micronesia" according to Laura Dacanay, First Hawaiian Bank Guam and CNMI region manager. "We are pleased to offer our customers a credit card with greater flexibil-

ity, which is associated with a program that will provide more travel destinations, making it the region's premier credit card program with the world's most rewarding loyalty program."

Launched in 1981, MileagePlus received the 2011 Frequent Traveler Award for Best Elite-Level Program and the Best Frequent Flyer Program from Global Traveler magazine for the eighth consecutive year. (PR)

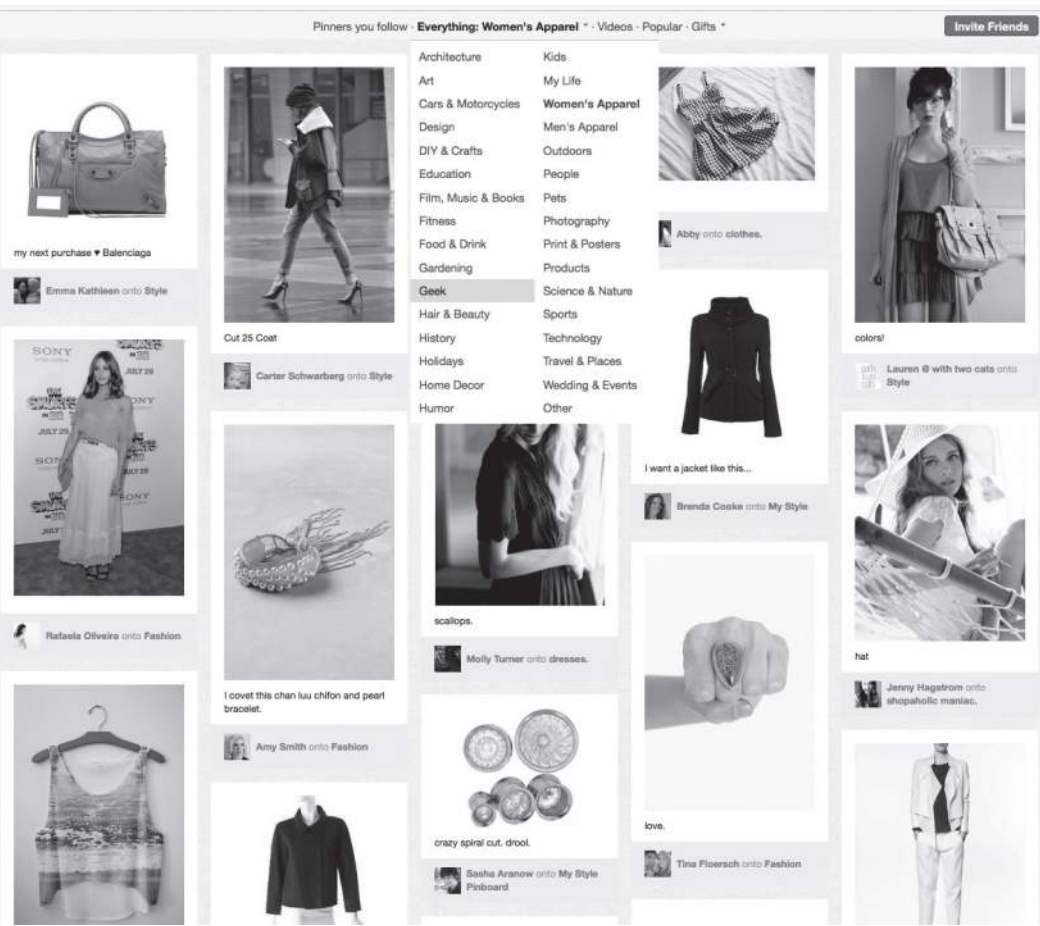
Interest spikes in Pinterest, notably from women

NEW YORK (AP)—Oh, you pretty things. Just look at the mama giraffe nuzzling a baby giraffe, that lovely idea for an indoor planter made of mason jars and those perfectly cooked bacon strips cooling on a plate. This is what people are circulating on Pinterest, the latest web-site-of-the-moment for sharing things you love.

Clean and simple to use, Pinterest attracts people who need to organize the chaos of Internet-age information overload. It serves as an online scrapbook of images they find on the Web, a place to post fashion inspirations, decorating aspirations and more. It's a digital dream collage, a recipe box and a corkboard full of magazine clippings all at once.

The site's popularity has exploded in recent months, making it one of the fastest-growing websites in history. Its ascent to 10 million monthly visitors happened faster than Facebook, Twitter or any other site tracked by comScore.

What makes Pinterest's surge unusual is that it's driven not by the usual geek crowd of young men from New York and San Francisco, but by women, many of whom live



This screen shot shows a page of women's products from Pinterest. The site's popularity has exploded in recent weeks. In a twist, though, the surge is driven not by the usual geek crowd of young men from New York and San Francisco, but by women who live in the Midwest and the central U.S.

Angela Bitz, a secretary at a hospital in Davenport, Iowa, says she was drawn by the

site's layout and ease of use. She uses Pinterest to collect decorating ideas for her home and for general crafting and cooking inspiration. She also turns to Pinterest for ideas on making jewelry from objects she finds.

"It has well-organized information that is easy to save and share with others, as well as the ability to keep up on what my friends like and are doing," she says.

Pinterest's co-founder Ben Silbermann is one of the most-anticipated speakers this week at the South by Southwest Interactive festival in Austin, Texas. As part of a question-and-answer session Tuesday,

he'll explain Pinterest's rapid growth outside of Silicon Valley and discuss the company's long-term goals. People will be watching closely, especially because Pinterest has been media-shy in recent weeks amid its meteoric rise.

Much of Pinterest's appeal is about displaying your plans and hopes. The trend is hardly new. Oprah Winfrey fans might recall the "O Dream Board" the talk-show host touted as a place to "envision your best life."

Steve Jones, professor of communication at the University of Illinois in Chicago, likened Pinterest to a bulletin board in a bedroom or dorm room.

Yahoo sues Facebook over patents

NEW YORK (AP)—Yahoo is suing Facebook over patents, just weeks before the social-networking heavyweight is due to cash in with its initial public offering of stock.

Yahoo Inc. said in a court filing Monday that Facebook has infringed 10 of its patents covering advertising, privacy controls and social networking. Yahoo had threatened to sue Facebook last month, insisting that the social network license its patents.

Facebook vowed to defend itself vigorously against what it called "puzzling actions" by Yahoo.

"We're disappointed that Yahoo, a longtime business partner of Facebook and a company that has substantially benefited from its association with Facebook, has decided to resort to litigation," Facebook said in a statement. Yahoo ties a lot of its online services to Facebook, which has helped it attract users.

As with many patent suits, this one will likely be resolved in a settlement or licensing deal. That said, the patent claims could cast a spotlight on Facebook's vulnerabilities as the company tries to complete an

IPO this spring. At the end of 2011, Facebook had just 56 U.S. patents, a relatively small number compared with other big tech companies. Yahoo owns more than 1,000 patents.

That trove of patents may come in handy for Yahoo, which has seen its revenue fall steadily over the past three years. But it could also cast the company as desperate, trying to extract money from soon-to-be-public Facebook.

Yahoo made hundreds of millions of dollars from a patent settlement that it reached with Google Inc. just before the Internet search leader went public in 2004. Facebook's IPO is expected to dwarf Google's, valuing the Menlo Park, Calif.-based social network at as much as \$100 billion.

Yahoo defended its lawsuit, saying it has invested "substantial resources in research and development" over the years leading to technology patents that other companies have licensed. Its lawsuit says that without Yahoo's innovations, Facebook and other websites would not enjoy "repeat visitors or substantial advertising revenue."

Feds probe sticky throttles in 1.9M Ford sedans

DETROIT (AP)—Federal safety regulators are investigating sticky accelerators in as many as 1.9 million Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable sedans.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration started the probe last week and expanded it on Monday to include cars from the 2001 through 2006 model years. The safety agency has received 14 complaints of Taurus sedans accelerating on their own. So far it has no reports of crashes or injuries

because of the problem.

A faulty cruise control cable may be the cause. It can detach and hold the throttle open, the agency said in documents posted on its website. In at least two of the complaints, drivers told NHTSA that their cars took off and ran red lights before they were able to bring them to a stop by shifting them into neutral or park.

"This is an extremely dangerous situation," one driver wrote in a complaint filed in August of 2010. "There needs to be some-

thing done about this before it becomes fatal."

It's a problem similar to one that tarnished Toyota Motor Corp.'s reputation about two years ago. The Japanese automaker eventually recalled 14 million vehicles worldwide because of acceleration problems, which it blamed on ill-fitting floor mats and sticky accelerator pedals. At the time NHTSA said at least 52 people were killed in crashes linked to Toyota's acceleration problems. A NHTSA

investigation cleared Toyota's electronic throttle controls as a cause of the problem.

Ford is cooperating with the NHTSA investigation, spokesman Daniel Pierce said on Monday. "It's asking for information like they have done in the past with other vehicles, and we will be working with them throughout the investigation," Pierce said. Ford received a request for data from NHTSA on Monday and it is just starting to look into how many complaints have been made to company dealers, Pierce said.

STOCK
PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW
12,959.71
+37.69
+0.29%

S&P
1,371.09
+0.22
+0.02%

NASDAQ
2,983.66
-4.68
-0.16%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	0.9475
British Pound	0.6389
Canadian Dollar	0.9897
Chinese Yuan	6.3280
Euro	0.7594

Hong Kong Dollar	7.7590
Indian Rupee	49.8750
Indonesian Rupiah	9,155.00
Japanese Yen	82.1450
Malaysian Ringgit	3.0225
New Zealand Dollar	1.2151

Philippine Peso	42.6300
Singapore Dollar	1.2565
South Korean Won	1,121.65
Swiss Franc	0.9155
Taiwan Dollar	29.4910
Thailand Baht	30.6500

Nation

AP source: Afghan shooter was from Stryker brigade

SEATTLE (AP)—A U.S. soldier suspected of killing at least 16 Afghan civilians in a night-time assault is from a brigade that was the first in the Army to use the Stryker, a nimble eight-wheeled, light infantry vehicle built for a post-Cold War era.

Now, the brigade and the Washington state base where it is located are grappling with one of its own being accused of one of the worst atrocities of the roughly decade-old war in Afghanistan.

The name of the 38-year-old soldier was not released because it would be “inappropriate” to do so before charges are filed, Pentagon spokesman George Little said. The soldier is in custody at a base in Kandahar.

The staff sergeant was deployed Dec. 3 with the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, based at Joint Base Lewis-McChord located south of Seattle, a congressional source told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

The soldier, who has been in the military for 11 years, served three tours in Iraq and is married with two children, was being held in pretrial confinement in Kandahar while Army officials review his complete deployment and medical history, Pentagon officials said.

A U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity because the matter is under investigation said that during a recent tour of duty in Iraq, the suspect was involved in a vehicle accident and suffered a head injury, although information about the extent of the injury wasn't available. The accident was not combat-related, and there was no available indication that his injury could



In this Sunday, March 11, 2012 photo, Afghan Army soldiers stand guard as a crowd gathers outside a military base in Panjwai, Kandahar province south of Kabul, Afghanistan.

be linked to abnormal behavior afterward, the official said. Two U.S. officials speaking on condition of anonymity said the suspect had been trained as a sniper.

The news about the killing spree was the latest difficult episode for Lewis-McChord over the past few years.

Home to about 100,000 military and civilian personnel, it's had a spate of suicides among soldiers back from war. And most famously, four service members were convicted in the deliberate killing of three Afghan civilians during patrols in 2010.

The soldier accused in Sunday's shooting is not from the same brigade. Those soldiers were from the 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, which has since been renamed the 2nd Stryker brigade.

The 3rd Stryker Brigade, the

brigade to which the accused soldier belongs, was the Army's first brigade to use the Stryker. The brigade deployed three times to Iraq before sending 2,500 soldiers to Afghanistan for the first time last December.

For this most recent deployment, it left its 300 Stryker vehicles at home and, instead, has been using vehicles that were already in Afghanistan and are more resistant to roadside bombs.

The source said the soldier was assigned on Feb. 1 to a village stability program in Belambai, half a mile from one of the villages where the attack took place Sunday. Villagers described an armed soldier moving through homes, shooting residents.

The village stability operations are part of NATO's efforts to transition out of Afghanistan.

They pair special operations troops with local villagers chosen by village elders to become essentially a sanctioned, armed neighborhood watch.

Army officials are reviewing the soldier's complete deployment and medical history.

In Washington state, Spc. Jared Richardson, an engineer at Lewis-McChord who served in Afghanistan, said the Army is working with soldiers to deal with their problems. But he said a decade of war has taken a toll on enlisted men and women.

“We're on uncharted territory now, and it's taking a toll on soldiers,” Richardson said.

Jorge Gonzalez, executive director of Coffee Strong, a coffee shop near Lewis-McChord that doubles as a resource center for soldiers looking to leave the Army, said frequent Stryker deployments are taking their toll.

Shootings further dent Americans' support for war

WASHINGTON (AP)—The weekend massacre of Afghan civilians, allegedly carried out by a U.S. soldier, newly undermines the rationale for a war that a majority of Americans already thought wasn't worth fighting. But the Obama administration and its allies insisted Monday the horrific episode would not speed up plans to pull out foreign forces.

President Barack Obama cautioned against a “rush for the exits,” telling television interviewers that the killings underscored the need to hand over responsibility for security to Afghans. He called the episode tragic, but said he would stick to his plan to gradually withdraw forces over the next two years.

“Keep in mind that I have put us on a path where we're going to have this war over by the end of 2014, that our troops

will be coming out, but we'll be coming out responsibly,” Obama said in an interview with KABC in Los Angeles.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called the killings “inexplicable.”

Speaking at the United Nations in New York, Clinton vowed that the incident “does not change our steadfast dedication to protecting the Afghan people and to doing everything we can to build a strong and stable Afghanistan.”

A U.S. Army staff sergeant is accused of slipping away from his base in the Taliban heartland of Kandahar and shooting nearby villagers in their homes. The house-by-house attack killed 16 Afghan civilians, including nine children asleep in their beds. The Pentagon offered no explanation of a possible mo-

tive, and would not release the soldier's name.

The killings were the latest in a series of deadly incidents that caused outrage for both Americans and Afghans.

The killing of Americans by their Afghan hosts and of Afghans by the Americans who are supposed to help them have forced an acute examination of a war strategy that calls for Afghans to assume greater responsibility for security through mentoring and “shoulder by shoulder” joint operations.

Despite the deaths, “Our strategic objectives have not changed and they will not change,” White House press secretary Jay Carney said.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, speaking with reporters traveling with him to Kyrgyzstan, said the death penalty is

a consideration as the military moves to investigate and possibly put on trial the soldier suspected in the deaths. In his first public remarks on the incident, Panetta said Monday the shootings must not derail the military mission in Afghanistan, and pressure to do so from political leaders in Kabul and Washington must not alter that course.

Obama expanded the Afghan war in the first year of his presidency, saying it was in keeping with U.S. national security interests in contrast to the Iraq war he opposed. But the war, now in its 11th year, remains a stalemate in much of the country, while the al-Qaida terror network that the war is supposed to deter has largely abandoned Afghanistan. U.S. commandos killed Sept. 11 mastermind Osama bin Laden last year.

Romney, rivals court Southern support

BILOXI, Miss. (AP)—Republican presidential contenders and their super PAC supporters campaigned aggressively on land, through the mail and over the airwaves Monday on the eve of primaries in Alabama and Mississippi with the potential to solidify or shake Mitt Romney's standing as front-runner.

In the Deep South, one of the most conservative regions of the country, Romney and his Republican rivals polished their credentials with attacks on President Barack Obama's handling of the economy and the nation's use of energy. “The dangers of carbon dioxide? Tell that to a plant, how dangerous carbon dioxide is,” said Rick Santorum.

But those criticisms were mere warm-up for the candidates going after each other. Gingrich is struggling for survival in Tuesday's primaries, and Santorum is laboring to redeem his claim that Romney can't secure the support of conservatives, particularly evangelicals who are part of the party's key base. “If the opportunity provides itself in an open convention, they're not going to nominate a moderate Massachusetts governor who has been outspending his opponent 10-1 and can't win the election outright,” Santorum said in a television interview as he campaigned across Alabama and Mississippi.

Romney countered, also on television. “We're closing the deal, state by state, delegate by delegate,” he said, emphasizing

ing his lead in the category that matters most.

He has more delegates than his rivals combined, and is amassing them at a rate that puts him on track to clinch control of nomination before the convention opens next summer, a prospect that his rivals prefer not to dwell on. AP's tally shows him with 454 of the 1,144 delegates needed to win the nomination, Santorum with 217, Gingrich with 107 and Ron Paul with 47.

The Republican contenders pointed toward the next primaries as a pair of national polls indicated Obama's support has fallen after recent gains. A Washington Post-ABC News poll found that 46 percent of those surveyed approve the way the president is handling his job, and 50 percent disapprove. A New York Times/CBS poll found 41 percent approval, and 47 percent disapproval.

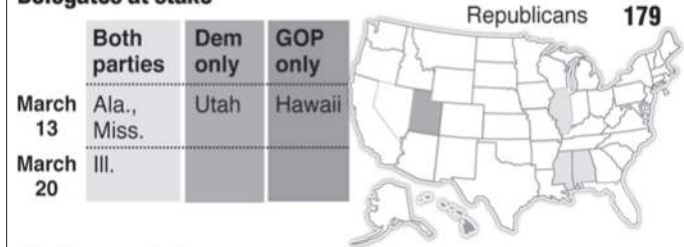
Evangelical voters play an outsized role in both state primaries. Four years ago, 77 percent of GOP primary voters in Alabama and 69 percent in Mississippi said they were born again or evangelicals, a group that Romney has struggled to bring to his side in the primaries. His best showing in a contested primary was 38 percent in Florida.

Hoping to establish a connection with Southerners, the former Massachusetts governor campaigned in Mobile, Ala., with comedian Jeff Foxworthy, whose trademark jokes that begin “You might be a red-neck if...”

What's next

Two primaries in the conservative southern states of Mississippi and Alabama are followed by a big contest in Illinois.

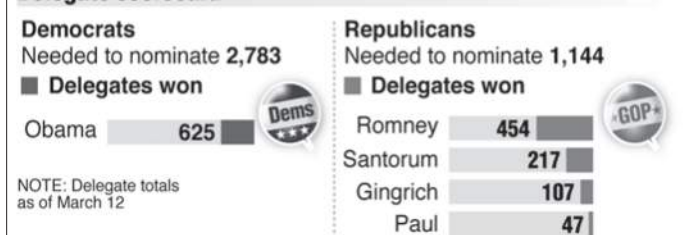
Delegates at stake



Who's won what As of March 12



Delegate scorecard



NOTE: Delegate totals as of March 12
Source: AP, Green Pages, CNN
Graphic: Melina Yingling, Judy Treible

Asia

Philippine court orders arrest of Arroyo's husband

By HRVOJE HRANJSKI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A Philippine court ordered the arrest Tuesday of former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's husband for allegedly receiving millions of dollars in bribes from a Chinese telecommunications company for a contract that was later found to be overpriced.

Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo's lawyer, Ferdinand Topacio, said that his client plans to turn himself in and post bail.

Mike Arroyo, a lawyer who was seen as a backroom operator during his wife's troubled nine-year presidency, is accused of accepting money to push through a \$330 million government contract with China's ZTE Corp. to set up a nationwide broadband network in 2007. The contract was originally priced at \$130 million.

Gloria Macapagal Arroyo approved the deal, but later backtracked under public pressure and a congressional investigation.

Jose Arroyo has denied wrongdoing and says the graft charges are flawed because the former president canceled the deal.

The former president, who left of-



Former Philippine President and now Congresswoman Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, center, is flanked by her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo, right, and son Diosdado "Dato" Arroyo as they arrive at a Pasay City Court for her arraignment on electoral fraud charges in Manila, Thursday Feb. 23, 2012.

ice in 2010, faces the same charges as her husband, and more. She is already under arrest in a military hospital on electoral fraud accusations and has pleaded innocent.

A former elections chief, Benjamin Abalos, and ex-Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza were

also charged over the ZTE contract and ordered arrested Tuesday. They previously testified in a Senate hearing and denied receiving millions of dollars in kickbacks.

Former Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri had testified that Abalos offered him a bribe to approve

the contract. Jose de Venecia III, a losing bidder with connections to the Arroyos' inner circle, testified that the ex-president's husband was promised a \$70 million commission.

Arroyo had prevented top officials, including Neri, from continuing to testify in the congressional probe. Under her successor, President Benigno Aquino III, the Philippines' ombudsman investigated and filed charges at the anti-graft court, which issued the arrest warrants. If convicted, they face a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

The issue was never properly investigated because Arroyo had barred top officials, including Neri, from disclosing further details that might have implicated her.

Aquino blames his predecessor for corruption and says he wants to clean up the government starting with the prosecution of the Arroyos and their allies. The former first couple accuse Aquino of a political vendetta.

The ZTE case has tested the Philippines' relations with China, which Arroyo aggressively pursued. Aquino appears more lukewarm to Beijing amid a resurgence in territorial tensions over disputed islands in the South China Sea.

Students protest US soldier who killed Afghans

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Hundreds of students in eastern Afghanistan are holding the first significant protest against a U.S. soldier who killed 16 Afghan civilians in a shooting spree.

The students shouted angry slogans on Tuesday against the soldier in the eastern city of Jalalabad and carried banners calling for his public trial.

Some of the protesters were constructing an effigy of President Barack Obama that they planned to burn.

Sunday's killings in Kandahar province have caused outrage in Afghanistan. But they have not sparked the kind of violent protests seen last month after American soldiers burned Muslim holy books.

The more muted response could be a result of Afghans being used to dealing with civilian casualties over a decade of war.

The soldier accused of killing 16 Afghan civilians, most of them children, and burning their bodies was trained as a sniper and recently suffered a head injury in Iraq, U.S. officials said Monday.

The name of the suspect, a married, 38-year-old father of two, has not been released. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta said he may face capital charges, and that the U.S. must resist pressure from Washington and Kabul to change course in Afghanistan because of anti-American outrage over the shooting.

"We seem to get tested almost every other day with challenges that test our leadership and our commitment to the mission that we're involved in," Panetta told reporters traveling with him to Kyrgyzstan. "War is hell."

A U.S. official said that during a recent tour of duty in Iraq, the sus-



Violent incidents fan feelings of mistrust

1. Jan. 12 Video surfaces; shows U.S. Marines urinating on the bodies of dead Taliban fighters made sometime in 2011 in Helmand Province

2. Feb. 20 Afghan workers find charred copies of Quran in fire pit at U.S.-run Bagram Air Base

3. Feb. 23 Two U.S. soldiers shot dead by Afghan soldier at base during protest over Quran burnings

4. Feb. 24 Two U.S. officers, advisors to Afghan Interior Ministry, shot at close range in high-security area by police intelligence officer

5. Feb. 27 Suicide bomber kills nine, including two U.S. soldiers, at base in Jalalabad

6. March 1 Two U.S. soldiers killed at a base in Kandahar by two Afghan soldiers and a civilian literacy instructor

7. March 11 U.S. soldier walks off base and kills 16

Source: Reuters, AP, ESRI
Graphic: Judy Treible © 2012 MCT

pect was involved in a vehicle accident and suffered a head injury. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the matter is under investigation.

The vehicle accident was not a combat-related event, the official said. There was no available indication about the extent of the injury, or whether his injury could be linked to any abnormal behavior afterward.

Two U.S. officials speaking on condition of anonymity said the suspect had been trained as a sniper.

Sunday's attack in southern Kandahar province unfolded in two villages near a U.S. base. Villager Mohammad Zahir recounted how an American soldier burst into his home in the middle of the night, searched the rooms, then dropped to a knee and shot his father in the thigh as he emerged from a bedroom.

"He was not holding anything—not even a cup of tea," Zahir said.

The shootings come as anti-Americanism already is boiling over in Afghanistan after U.S. troops burned Qurans last month and a video of Marines urinating on alleged Taliban corpses was posted on the Internet in January.

If the attack unleashes another wave of anti-foreigner hatred, it could threaten the future of the U.S.-led coalition's mission in Afghanistan. The events have also raised doubts among U.S. political figures that the long and costly war is worthy.

An enraged Afghan President Hamid Karzai called it "an assassination, an intentional killing of innocent civilians" that cannot be forgiven. He demanded an explanation from Washington for the deaths, which included nine children and three women.

NATO and member countries said

the slayings were a blow to the alliance's efforts to cultivate trust but would not affect the timeline to hand over security operations to Afghans by the end of 2014. The White House said U.S. objectives will not change because of the killings.

Outraged Afghan lawmakers called for a suspension of talks on how to formalize a long-term U.S. military presence in the country and demanded that the shooter face trial in an Afghan court.

The soldier, a staff sergeant who has been in the military for 11 years and served three tours in Iraq, was being held in pretrial confinement in Kandahar by the U.S. military while Army officials review his complete deployment and medical history, Pentagon officials said.

The soldier's name was not released because it would be "inappropriate" to do so before charges are filed, said Pentagon spokesman George Little.

But Panetta, his first public remarks on the incident, said Monday evening the death penalty is a consideration as the military moves to investigate and possibly put the suspect on trial.

The soldier was deployed to Afghanistan on Dec. 3 with the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, based at Joint Base Lewis-McChord located south of Seattle, according to a congressional source, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

He was attached Feb. 1 to the village stability program in Belambai, a half-mile from one of the villages where the attack took place, the source said.

Zahir told how he watched the soldier enter his house and move through it methodically, checking each room.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Afghan officials: 45 feared trapped in avalanche

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—An avalanche struck two remote villages in northeast Afghanistan on Monday and 45 people were feared trapped in the snow, authorities said. The avalanche hit the villages of Poshan and Ghadoor in Mondol district of Nuristan province, said provincial spokesman Mohammad Zareen. "We are not sure how many died and how many survived," he said. "There is no rescue team there yet." Zareen said that nearby villagers were working to try to locate victims and survivors in Monday's avalanche. "It's not enough," he said. "We are calling for more help."

Gunmen shoot Philippine reporter who covers Aquino

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Gunmen have shot and seriously wounded a reporter who is assigned to cover the Philippine president, bringing the urgency of concerns over violent attacks on journalists to Manila's seat of power. President Benigno Aquino III, fellow journalists and media watchdogs Monday strongly condemned the attack on The Daily Tribune reporter Fernan Angeles, who was beaten and shot six times with a pistol by unidentified men near his home in suburban Pasig city in metropolitan Manila. Pasig police chief Senior Supt. Jessie Cardona said Angeles, 41, was attacked when he left his home to go to a nearby store to buy credits for his mobile phone Sunday night.

Tibetan teen self-immolates on revolt anniversary

BEIJING (AP)—A teenage Tibetan monk set himself on fire in protest on the 53rd anniversary of the failed Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule, an overseas activist group said Tuesday. The London-based Free Tibet group said 18-year-old Gepey self-immolated on Saturday in Aba, a town that is under heavy security lockdown in western Sichuan province. The group says Gepey was a monk from the town's Kirti Monastery, the scene of numerous protests against the Chinese government over the past several years. March 10 marked the start of the unsuccessful revolt that eventually caused the Dalai Lama to flee the Himalayan region in 1959.

Thousands join anti-government rally in Bangladesh

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—Tens of thousands of people joined an opposition rally in Bangladesh's capital on Monday to demand that a nonpartisan caretaker government oversee the next general election. Riot police surrounded the rally but no clashes were reported. The main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party and its Islamist ally, Jamaat-e-Islami, are demanding the restoration of a constitutional provision that required incumbent governments to transfer power to a neutral caretaker administration to conduct polls. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government scrapped the 15-year-old system last year.

Dozens missing in Bangladesh ferry accident

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—A ferry packed with about 200 people capsized in a river in southern Bangladesh early Tuesday and authorities said dozens of people were missing. Local police chief Mohammad Shahabuddin Khan said about 35 people were rescued after the ferry sank on the Meghna River after colliding with a cargo boat. He said no bodies have been found yet. The accident site is in Munshiganj district, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) south of the capital, Dhaka. Khan said rescue workers were trying to locate the sunken ferry, the MV Shariatpur-1. The ferry was traveling to Dhaka from neighboring Shariatpur district to the southwest. Estimates as to how many people were on board the ferry varied.

World

Activists: At least 16 civilians killed in Syria reprisals

BEIRUT (AP)—Syrian activists said Monday that pro-government gunmen killed at least 16 people, including some children, in a rebel stronghold recaptured by the government, fueling concerns the government is carrying out reprisals in territory it has taken back.

State media in Damascus, which often ignores activists' claims, confirmed killings in Homs but blamed "armed terrorists," as it frequently calls those behind the yearlong uprising against President Bashar Assad's regime.

At the United Nations, the U.S. and Russia clashed after Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appealed to the divided Security Council to speak with one voice and help Syria "pull back from the brink of a deeper catastrophe."

Washington and Moscow both called for an end to the bloody conflict—but on different terms, leaving prospects for U.N. action in doubt.

The reports of killings in the battered city of Homs added to concerns that the hundreds of civilian deaths caused by the fighting would be compounded by reprisals against opposition supporters in recaptured towns and neighborhoods.

Fresh from stamping out rebel centers of resistance in Homs, government forces are pressing on with new offensives in other parts of central and northern Syria.

The main Syrian opposition group, the Syrian National Council, called for "immediate" Arab and international military intervention, including setting up safe corridors for humanitarian aid and a no-fly zone to protect civilians.

The Britain-based Syrian



In this Sunday, March 11, 2012 photo, a man carries a boy who was severely wounded during heavy fighting between Syrian rebels and government forces in Idlib, north Syria.

Observatory for Human Rights said at least 16 people were killed Sunday night in Homs, while the Local Coordination Committees said 45 were killed. Both groups said children were among the dead.

They accused "shabiha," gunmen akin to a militia that basically do the government's bidding and who have played a major role in trying to crush the year-old uprising, of carrying out the killing.

Homs is the Syrian city hardest hit by violence since the uprising began in March last year. Several Homs neighborhoods, including Karm el-Zeytoun, where Sunday's deaths oc-

curred, were controlled by rebels and retaken by government forces earlier this month.

The Observatory said after the killings, many people fled Karm el-Zeytoun and other nearby neighborhoods, fearing pro-government gunmen might carry out more reprisals.

Pictures posted online by activists showed the bodies of five children who were disfigured after being apparently hit with sharp objects. At least six dead adults were shown covered with sheets.

An amateur video posted online showed men wrapping the bodies of the dead with white cloth, in accordance with Muslim tradition, before burial.

"This is what they do to us, the Sunnis. The Sunnis are being wiped out. They are the ones who are dying at the hands of Iran and the Shiites," shouted a man in the background. Shiite Iran is one of the Assad regime's few remaining allies. The authenticity of the videos could not be independently confirmed.

Another video aired on state-run Syrian TV showed bodies in three different places in Karm el-Zeytoun.

The first was of a family killed inside their home, showing a dead man on what appeared to be a couch with children next to him. The other was of three handcuffed men on a street,

while the third was in a building under construction, where five bodies were lying on the ground.

It was not clear if the family shown on state TV was the same one that activists posted in their picture. The TV did not say when the killing occurred or how many people died.

The Syrian government accused armed groups in Homs of kidnapping people, then killing and disfiguring them in order to bring international condemnation onto the regime.

Assad's government attributes the uprising to armed groups and terrorists acting out a foreign conspiracy.

Activists put the blame for the killing on the government.

The Observatory called on the United Nations to investigate the deaths.

All this is adding pressure on U.N. Security Council members, who are meeting to decide what to do next to stop the violence. A peacemaking mission by U.N. and Arab League envoy Kofi Annan faltered, with both government and opposition rejecting talks.

A private meeting later Monday between U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was likely to focus on the two countries' serious differences over how to address the violence in Syria. The U.N. estimates over 7,500 people have died since the uprising began.

The two clashed at the U.N. ahead of the meeting.

Clinton rejected any equivalence between rebel actions and the "premeditated murders" carried by Assad's "military machine." Lavrov said Syrian authorities "bear a huge share of responsibility," but he insisted opposition fighters and extremists, including al-Qaida, are also committing violent acts.

Annan, speaking Monday in Turkey, urged the world to send a clear message to Damascus in the face of "grave and appalling reports of atrocities."

Also Monday, the Syrian news agency reported that an "armed terrorist group" blew up a pipeline that transports diesel fuel from the central province of Homs to the nearby region of Hama.

There have been several fires and explosions cutting oil and gas pipelines since the uprising began. Damascus blames them on armed groups, but the opposition says they are caused by government shelling.

Egypt: Cease-fire between Israel, Gaza militants

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—Egypt has mediated a cease-fire between Palestinian militant factions and Israel after four days of violence, an Egyptian security official said.

The official told The Associated Press that a cease-fire went into effect at 1 a.m. Tuesday (2300 GMT). He spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. It was not immediately clear when a formal announcement of a cease-fire would be made.

The official said that after hours of talks, the Palestinians agreed to stop launching rockets at southern Israeli cities and Israel agreed to stop targeting militants in airstrikes.

Neither Palestinian militant groups or Israel would immediately comment. There were no reports of violence by either side.

The fighting was triggered by Israel's killing of a militant leader last week. Twenty-four

Palestinians died, including seven on Monday, and about 1 million Israelis in rocket range have seen their lives disrupted by the threat of rocket attacks, with frequent sirens warning them to run for cover.

Earlier, Egyptian cease-fire efforts had appeared to stall.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had warned that Israel would keep striking those trying to harm Israeli civilians and that Israel was "ready to broaden its operation."

Gaza militants insisted that Israel stop firing first and that it promise to halt airstrikes aimed at killing Gaza militants for good—a guarantee Israel is unlikely to give.

Meanwhile, government officials and missile experts in Israel praised the performance of Iron Dome, an Israeli-made system designed to shoot down short-range rockets like those fired from Gaza.

Iron Dome has been rolled out over the past year, and the current fighting poses its most serious test. Israel has other systems deployed against longer-range missiles.

Iron Dome uses cameras and radar to track incoming rockets and intercepts only those that would pose a threat to people and property, ignoring those that are expected to fall in open areas.

The military said that of 143 rockets fired since Friday, it tried to intercept 63 and succeeded in all but nine of those attempts. No Israelis have been killed in the current fighting, and property damage has been relatively minor.

Uzi Rubin, a missile expert and former Defense Ministry official, said Iron Dome has exceeded expectations. "The performance up to now has been almost flawless," Rubin said, adding that the perception could change quickly in the event of

casualties.

Military analyst Yiftah Shapir said Iron Dome would likely score fewer interceptions if Israel were attacked by a larger number of missiles simultaneously, a scenario Israel would have to consider if it attacks Iran over its nuclear program. Tehran's proxies on Israel's borders—the Lebanese Hezbollah militia, along with Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Gaza—are believed to have a stockpile of tens of thousands of rockets and missiles.

Shapir said Iron Dome has given a psychological boost to those living in rocket range, but it has not reduced the economic damage caused by closing schools and keeping hundreds of thousands of people from their jobs and daily routines.

Others noted that each intercept costs about \$100,000, arguing that the cost could be prohibitive if Israel were fighting a full-fledged war.

Police: Belgian mosque attacked, imam dies

BRUSSELS (AP)—A mosque near Brussels was the target Monday evening of an arson attack in which the imam died, Belgian authorities said late Monday.

One man was arrested—a Muslim who said he was born in 1978—in the attack on the mosque in Anderlecht, a suburb of Brussels, the Belgian capital, said Jean-Marc Meilleur, a spokesman for the Brussels Prosecutor's Office.

"It seemed that this person showed up and pulled out a knife and an ax, and that he spread flammable products—petrol we assume—in order to start a fire and threaten the mosque occupants," Meilleur said.

He said the man's name and age could not be verified, as he

had no identification papers. He said the man had been locked in a room by worshippers at the mosque before authorities apprehended him.

Marie Verbeck, a police spokeswoman, told The Associated Press that no other people were being sought in connection with the attack.

One other person was lightly injured, Meilleur said. He said the attack took place between 6 and 7 p.m. local time.

An Associated Press photographer at the scene saw fire damage and people gathered outside the mosque, some of whom were praying.

Le Soir newspaper said the imam, whom it reported to be 47 years old, died trying to put out the fire. Verbeck said she did not have the name of the imam.

Focus

PRESCOTT, Ark. (AP)—When their older brother Jeremy died in Afghanistan, Ben and Beau Wise did what loyal brothers and soldiers do. They stood solemnly in uniform at his memorial, laid red roses in front of his picture, and Ben spoke bravely to a chapel full of loved ones who came to mourn.

Soldiers themselves, Ben and Beau knew what their fallen brother had experienced and seen. They knew the difficulties of being a warrior and a devoted husband, and what a testament it was to Jeremy's character that he had excelled at both.

"Jeremy, I miss you and I love you, brother," Ben said. "And see you again."

Two years later, Ben died at a hospital in Germany after an insurgent attack left him with injuries that first cost him his legs, then cost him his life. He was 34, a year younger than Jeremy was when a suicide bomber killed him at a CIA base where he was working as a defense contractor.

For a family that had already paid the highest price of war, it was time for another funeral, another eulogy, another grave.

The eldest Wise boys are two of the thousands of Americans who have died since the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan began. But they share a link that most do not: They were brothers.

"They laid down their lives, both of them, so that others could live," their mother, Mary Wise, said.

Jeremy, Ben and Beau played with soldiers long before they became soldiers themselves.

Playtime was something of a battlefield rehearsal. When the G.I. Joes were idle, their toys morphed into land mines, waiting to be stepped on in the carpet at the family's home in southern Arkansas.

The three Wise boys and their sister, Heather, grew up in a small town called El Dorado. It wasn't a far drive from the country, where their father, Jean, taught the boys to hunt squirrels and deer when he wasn't treating patients as an ear, nose and throat doctor.

The house was always full of something: the smell of mom's venison fried up with lemon pepper, the sound of the kids riffing on guitars or banging on drums. Amid the chaos, though, was harmony. A friend once asked why they didn't have cable. Ben looked at him and said, "We've got each other."

At night, when Beau was tucked into bed, the big kids would have story time. Ben and Heather would sit with legs crossed and listen to Jeremy, who even as a teenager, saw himself as a protector: sword in hand, clad in armor, crossing bridges to battle monsters with glowing eyes and yellow breath.

"In the story, of course, he's always the hero," their sister, Heather Skaleski, said.

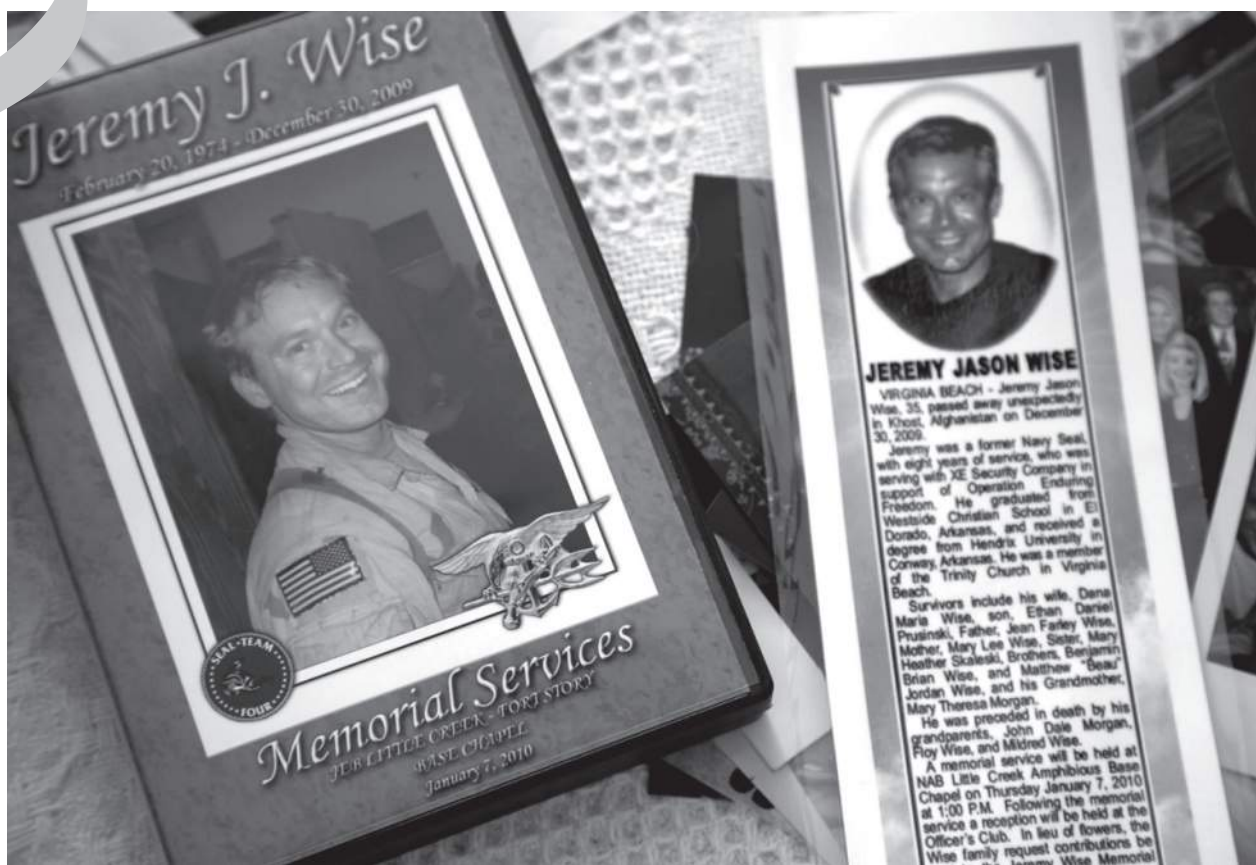
As they grew older, military dreams turned into career plans. Ben aired his by the time he was in Sunday school.

Most of his classmates raised their hands when a teacher asked what they wanted to do when they grew up. Not Ben. He got up from his seat and drew a picture of a soldier on the board.

Years later, in 2000, he enlisted in the Army—and then told his mother.

"I was indignant because I was Mommy and I thought he should talk with me, which I realize now was laughable," his mother said.

Jeremy signed up next, dropping out of medical school to become a



In this photo taken Jan. 24, 2012, the image of former Navy SEAL Jeremy Wise is shown on the cover of a video of his 2009 memorial service and a newspaper obit displayed at his sister's home in Prescott, Ark.

DOUBLE SACRIFICE:

Family loses sons in Afghanistan



In this Jan. 24, 2012 photo, Heather Skaleski reminisces about two of her brothers, U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Ben Wise, and former U.S. Navy SEAL Jeremy Wise, in her Prescott, Ark., home. Her brothers were killed in Afghanistan.

Navy SEAL.

The last to join the military was Beau. Determined to keep her last son out of harm's way, his mother refused to cook for him for two weeks when he announced he was going to become a Marine.

"I was just so mad because I wanted to protect him," Mary Wise said.

Her protests didn't work. He followed his brothers.

Once the deployments began, they seemed constant.

Beau shipped off to Afghanistan for the first time in 2009. Ben had finished a deployment earlier that year and was preparing for another with his Special Forces unit in 2010.

"One was always coming or two were there and one was home," their mother said.

Jeremy had just retired as a Navy SEAL and was working as a defense contractor in Afghanistan. He thought he could spend more time with his family that way and still serve his country. When he was home in Virginia, he played ninjas with his stepson, Ethan, and hung around his wife, Dana, even if she was doing something as mundane as laundry.

"He loved us almost suffocatingly so," she said.

When he was working in Afghanistan, Jeremy called home often and made the adventure sound like a vacation. He talked about the food, the hotels—not the danger.

"He wouldn't tell me anything about it because he didn't want me to worry," his sister, Heather, said.

The risk became real at the end of 2009, when the Wise parents were celebrating the birth of Ben's baby boy in Washington state. Amid the celebration, word came from overseas: A suicide bomber had killed Jeremy at a CIA base in Afghanistan.

His family met his remains in Dover, Del. It was a cold, gray day and the family waited inside a bus that felt like a funeral parlor, Heather recalled. Ben took Heather's hand in his and they whispered memories about their brother.

Deployments were harder after that. Ben and Beau headed back over-

seas not long after the funeral. The war started wearing on Ben, a medic who repaired the wounds that men inflict on each other. He worried about his younger brother serving in another part of Afghanistan.

"(Beau's) heading home here in the next few days, which is a huge load off my mind," Ben wrote in a Facebook message to a friend.

He waited for his own homecoming. During his final deployment, Ben would tell his sister stories about his son, Luke. Then he would cut himself off, unable to talk about the baby boy he couldn't hold in his arms.

"The pain comes in when you have to think about home, think about the people you love and then just try to block it out ... for your family and for your fellow soldiers," Heather recalled him saying.

He prayed. He had faith that he would come home. So much faith that he turned down a friend's offer to ship him a care package in December, telling him that he would be packing up by the time it arrived.

The next month, an insurgent shot Ben after he and his fellow soldiers saved a number of women and children in Afghanistan. A medic unto the end, he helped tend to his own wounds before he was flown to a hospital in Germany.

Beau caught a flight and accompanied Ben's wife to the hospital, where she saw her husband for the last time before becoming a widow. Ben fought to stay alive, even after doctors cut off his legs, even as his body failed, even as his organs started shutting down. He died on Jan. 15, shortly before his parents arrived to say goodbye.

Beau called Heather.

"We were crying and I said, 'It's just you and me now, bro,'" she said. "Just us two."

Again, the family found themselves in the same chapel, the same veterans cemetery, to say goodbye.

They moved Jeremy's grave so that the brothers could lie side by side in Suffolk, Va.

"To lose Jeremy was devastating," his widow, Dana, said. "To lose Ben was just ... you throw your hands up in the air."

Each brother's tombstone cites part of the Bible. Jeremy's points to a chapter that's often read at happier times: 1 Corinthians 13. Part of it reads: "When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me."

The family still calls them boys.

The youngest, Beau, is planning to move closer to Ben's family. Later this year, his mother says, he'll transfer from his base in Hawaii to one on the mainland. He'll remain in the military, at least for now.

He will not deploy for war again.

Though the Marines will not talk specifically about Beau's case, the military has policies in place to protect surviving sons like Beau and families like the Wises. It's rare for brothers to die in the same war, but not unheard of. One of the most famous cases of siblings dying in war is the five Sullivan brothers, who died together at sea during a battle in World War II.

Mary Wise says the military assured her that Beau won't be sent into conflict again.

Their family has sacrificed enough. More than enough.

Campus Life

Attendance matters: Part II

Kagman High School is committed to providing a safe, challenging environment for students to develop and apply skills and knowledge to become responsible, productive citizens.

Our philosophy is that all students can learn. All students are diverse and learn at different rates and in different learning styles. We believe that every student's foundation is a result of student-teacher-parent-and-community collaboration. We believe that all of the principles of character shape the kind of citizens we become in our daily lives. We expect our students to be responsible and be accountable for actively participating in their own learning. And that ALL learning connects students with the real world.

In the real world, attendance matters. Kagman High School keeps track of attendance diligently. Every student who is late or absent is reported to the truant office. The truant officer calls home to inform parents when a student is absent, at every period. Cutting class is not as much of an issue now that we have this period-by-period update throughout the day. Since the school year has begun in September, we have successfully identified 19 trancies in the first semester of this school year. Our previous data shows that only half of all trancies were being identified. Kids were getting away with skipping school because no one knew they were not present. Now things have changed. Because

of our rigorous monitoring practices, a student who skips a class will be caught.

Since this rigorous monitoring practice has been in place, our data has shown a steady rise in absenteeism each month. In September 2011, the average percentage of students absent during first period was 4 percent of the school enrollment or 27 students. Now in February, the average number of students absent in first period has doubled to 8.7 percent. There was a daily average of 48 students absent for first period for the month of February. This is 20 more students than in September! This gets worse if you compare the first period with the fourth period.

In a school day, it is typical to have more absences at the end of the day than at the beginning of the day, as students get sick, people have appointments etc. In September fourth period absences were at 7 percent. They have risen to an alarming 13.79 percent by this sixth month of school. There are over 90 students ab-

sent during fourth period on an average day at Kagman High. A daily average of 90 students do not receive the instruction they need to pass their classes and do well on the end of course exams. There are only 668 students enrolled at KHS. To have close to 100 of them gone on any given day leaves a big gap in all things important to achievement.

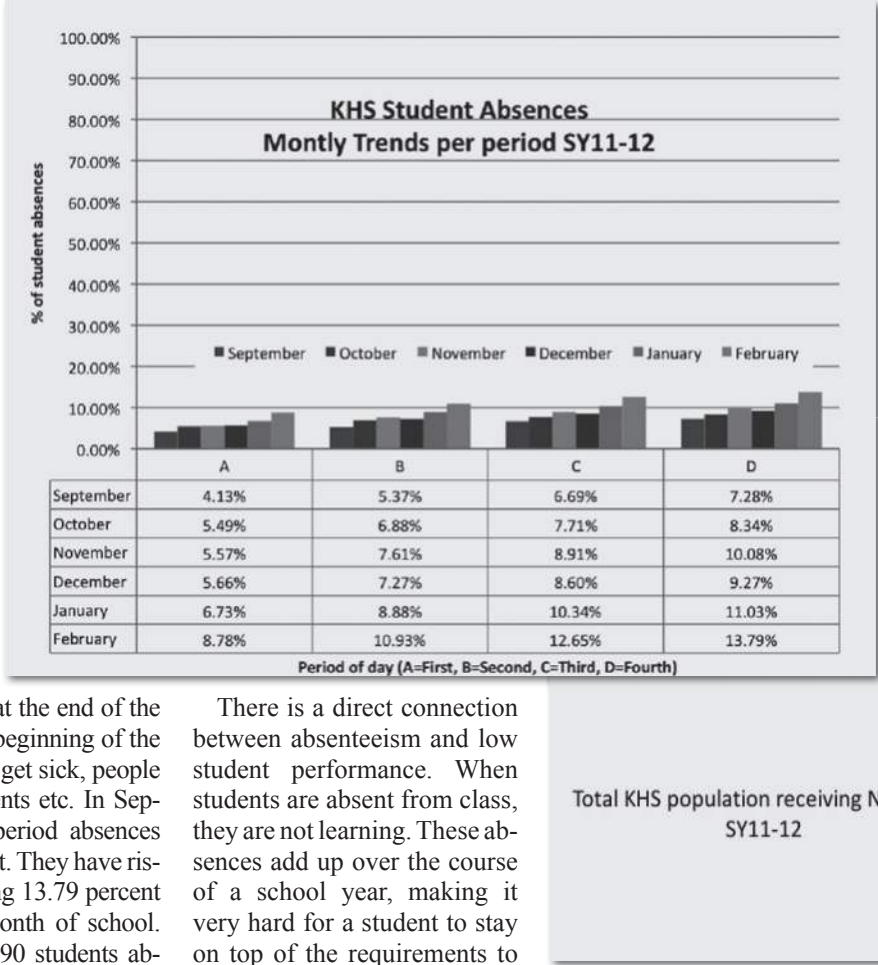
pass a class. Students who often fall behind often fall out of the system. This is something Kagman High School wants to change. We recognize a need to educate our stakeholders on this issue because absences and tardies continue to be on the rise.

One way parents and students can support attendance is by arranging for all appoint-

ments to be scheduled after school hours so their child does not miss any part of the school day. Attending other events, like funerals and other family gatherings should be prioritized for only immediate family when having to miss school. Additionally for any pre-notified absences, communicating with the teacher is the best practice to ensure the student does not miss any essential work if absences are unavoidable.

We are happy to report that students not receiving credit due to absenteeism has dropped by 6 percent in the second quarter of this school year. Male students, who previously lost credit due to absenteeism two times more than their female counterparts, have dramatically improved their attendance. More male students are receiving credit this term because of their attendance. For this, we celebrate!

Our data has shown us that we are on the right course, but we are a long way from reaching our destination. Kagman High School is committed to intervening so these detrimental patterns change. We want all of our students to be successful, and attendance is key. In the real world, being on time is important. If you are late for your job on a regular basis, you may not have that job for very long. If you are late for critical meetings, such as a job interview, you may not be chosen for that position. If you are late or absent for court dates, you might have a bench warrant out for you! Kagman High School believes that reliable attendance is a corner stone in the foundation of a successful life. We encourage parents to emphasize the importance of attendance with their kids and support Kagman High School's efforts by ensuring *all* students are at school daily and on time. *(KHS)*



WINNING TEAM
Left, congratulations to the student of Koblerville Elementary School for winning first place in the 2012 Girls Volleyball Tournament.

Below left, congratulations to all the student of Koblerville Elementary School for winning second place in the Boys Volleyball Tournament 2012.



READING MACHINE

Fourth grader Hannah Chan of Saipan International School (SIS) is a reading machine. This school year she has read 57 books and over 2,446,985 words. She has taken 57 quizzes and has passed them all, getting 95.8 percent of the questions correct. The Accelerated Reader Program at SIS is in its third year and has improved reading comprehension and vocabulary from grades K-11th grade. Hannah has acquired over 351.5 points that she uses to obtain prizes. After 29 weeks of school, the fourth graders needed 104 points. She has surpassed that by 247.5 points. Wow! With a reading level of 5.8, Hannah continues to strive for perfection. She is one of the many "Super Readers" at SIS. Great job Hannah!



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Life & Style

Love letters reveal Richard Nixon's sensitive side

YORBA LINDA, Calif. (AP)—When Richard Nixon first met his future bride, he was so smitten he pined for her night and day, he schemed of romantic getaways and he put it all down in writing.

Decades before he became known to some as "Tricky Dick," Nixon was the one penning nicknames (sweet ones) to his future bride in gushy love notes that reveal a surprisingly soft and starry-eyed side of the man taken down by Watergate. Nixon shared the stage with Patricia Ryan in a community theater production and six of the dozens of letters they exchanged during their two-year courtship will be unveiled Friday at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum as part of an exhibit celebrating the 100th birthday of the woman Nixon playfully called his "Irish gypsy."

In Nixon's letters, he recalls their first meeting in flowery prose, daydreams about their future together and waxes poetic about the first time his "dearest heart" agreed to take a drive with him.

"Every day and every night I want to see you and be with you. Yet I have no feeling of selfish ownership or jealousy," he writes in one undated letter. "Let's go for a long ride Sunday; let's go to the mountains weekends; let's read books in front of fires; most of all, let's really grow together and find the happiness we know is ours."

Eighteen years after his death, the correspondence offers a tiny window into a fiercely private side of Nixon that almost no



In this June 5, 1960 file photo, former President Richard Nixon, left, and his wife Pat pose for photos while campaigning at Rockefeller Center in New York. Six love letters between the 37th president and his wife will go on display Friday, March 16, 2012 as part of an exhibit at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum.

one ever saw and represents a love letter of sorts to fans of the 37th president, who were infuriated when the National Archives took over the museum and overhauled it to include a detailed chronicle of Watergate.

"These letters are fabulous. It's a totally different person from the Watergate tapes that people know. President Nixon started out as an idealistic young man ready to conquer the world and with Pat Ryan he knew he could do it. There's a lot of hope, there's a lot of tenderness and it's very poetic," said Olivia Anastasiadis, supervisory museum curator.

"He loved her, he was ab-

solutely enthralled by her and that's all he thought about."

The letters stand in stark contrast to the grim-faced leader forced to resign in 1974, disgraced.

Instead, Nixon comes across as an ardent and persistent suitor in the letters, which date from 1938 to just before the couple's marriage in June 1940.

The two met while auditioning for "The Dark Tower" in the Southern California town of Whittier and dated for two years until Nixon proposed to his sweetheart on the south Orange County cliffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean. He later delivered her engagement ring

in a small basket overflowing with mayflowers. They were married in a small ceremony on June 21, 1940.

The romantic touch and chivalry that Nixon brought to his seaside proposal comes through in the letters, as well.

In two of the handwritten notes, Nixon—raised a Quaker—uses "thee" instead of "you" to refer to his future bride, a pronoun that signals a special closeness in the Quaker tradition. He also writes about himself in the third person, referring to himself as a "prosaic person" whose heart was nonetheless "filled with that grand poetic music" upon knowing her.

"Somehow on Tuesday there was something electric in the usually almost stifling air in Whittier. And now I know. An Irish gypsy who radiates all that is happy and beautiful was there. She left behind her a note addressed to a struggling barrister who looks from a window and dreams. And in that note he found sunshine and flowers, and a great spirit which only great ladies can inspire," Nixon wrote. "Someday let me see you again? In September? Maybe?"

A much more practical—and

somewhat less impulsive—Pat Ryan replies in one short note: "In case I don't see you before why don't you come early Wednesday (6)—and I'll see if I can burn a hamburger for you." The object of Nixon's affection was slower to come around, but eventually was just as smitten with Nixon as he was with her, said Ed Nixon, Nixon's youngest brother, in a phone interview from his Seattle home.

"She was quite an independent young lady and she was very cautious about anyone she met and if they couldn't smile, she wouldn't want to do too much unless she could make them smile. That captured Dick's imagination," the younger Nixon said. "She was challenging. She challenged me and I think she challenged Dick."

Nixon's presidency began to unravel in 1972 when burglars who were later tied to his reelection committee broke into the Democratic headquarters to get dirt on his political adversaries. Nixon denied knowing about plans for the break-in beforehand, but an 18 1/2 minute gap in a recording of a post-Watergate White House meeting led many to suspect a cover-up.

Faced with impeachment and a possible criminal indictment, Nixon resigned on Aug. 9, 1974, and retreated to his native California. The following month he was granted a pardon by President Gerald Ford.

Pat Nixon never doubted her husband and stood by him until she died in 1993, a day after their 53rd wedding anniversary, said Robert Bostock, a consultant to the Richard Nixon Foundation, which is co-sponsoring the exhibit, and a former aide to Nixon after he left the White House.

Her loyalty and spirit was a testament to their love and part of what bound them together from the earliest days of their courtship in Whittier, when he was a young attorney and she a high school stenography teacher fresh out of college.

"She was with him the whole way; she never lost faith in him. Her feeling was that it was the country's loss when he had to resign, that he had accomplished so much good and had so much more good to accomplish," Bostock said. "Her favorite saying was, 'Onward and upward.' She spent no time looking back. She was always looking forward."

Mystery witness emerges in 'Housewives' trial

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The trial over Nicollette Sheridan's firing from "Desperate Housewives" featured one last twist Monday with the disclosure of a mystery witness who has indicated show officials tried to cover up correspondence related to the actress.

A judge ordered the man to appear in court Tuesday morning to determine whether he will become one of the final witnesses that jurors considering the case will hear from. The man, who was identified as Michael Reinhart, left a message for Sheridan's attorney on Sunday afternoon stating that he mistakenly got an email that suggested that messages related to Sheridan's departure would be purged.

The man on the message said he didn't want to become involved in the case, but by day's end had becoming the latest intriguing thread in a trial that has featured a behind-

the-scenes look at "Desperate Housewives" and conflicting testimony on whether Sheridan was struck by show creator Marc Cherry during a September 2008 dispute.

"There was a definite conspiracy to cover up the correspondence on email-wise in regards to Nicollette," the caller is heard saying on the call, which was played in court outside the presence of the jury.

Adam Levin, an attorney for Cherry and ABC, dismissed the claims. He noted in court that he had not spoken with Reinhart.

"Today's antics by the plaintiff, conjuring up mysterious emails, appears to be a last ditch effort save her case," Levin said after Monday's proceedings.

Closing arguments are likely to begin on Tuesday as both sides call their final witnesses. Sheridan's attorney Mark Baute, who received the mes-

sage Sunday, said he would like to call Reinhart as a witness.

Sheridan, 48, is suing Cherry and ABC for wrongful termination and battery and is seeking \$6 million in damages.

Numerous witnesses for the show's creator and network have testified that the decision to kill off Sheridan's Edie Britt character was made in May 2008, four months before her dustup with Cherry on the show's set. Cherry maintains he tapped the actress while trying to give her direction for a scene, but Sheridan claims he struck her hard on the left temple, leaving her stunned and humiliated.

The incident happened during the show's fifth season, which was Sheridan's final one on the series.

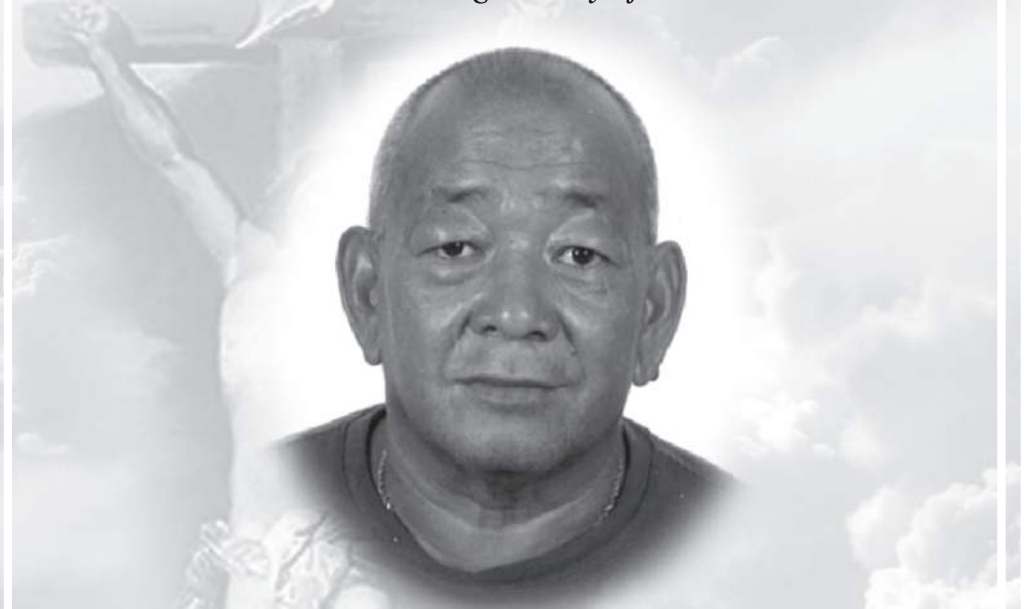
"Desperate Housewives," a glossy prime-time comedy/soap opera with an ensemble cast including Teri Hatcher and Longoria, made a pop-culture and ratings splash when it premiered in 2004 but has seen its audience dwindle. It is in its last season.



Sheridan

First Year Death Anniversary

In Loving Memory of



† Jesus Ricardo Palacios Agulto

We, the family humbly invite all our relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the passing of our dearly "Jesus" unto eternal life.

Nightly Mass will be offered at 6:00PM beginning on March 12 through March 20, 2012 at the San Vicente Church.

Please join us in prayers

Si Yu'us Ma'ase – Thank You

Rita R. Agulto children and family

Lost mural by Leonardo da Vinci may have been found

FLORENCE, Italy (AP)—Researchers may have discovered traces of a lost mural by Leonardo da Vinci by poking a probe through cracks in a 16th-century fresco painted on the wall of one of Florence's most famous buildings.

The latest findings Monday still leave much mystery in the hunt for the "Battle of Anghiari," a wall mural painted by Leonardo in Florence's storied Palazzo Vecchio, and possibly hidden behind a fresco done by Giorgio Vasari decades later.

The hunt for the unfinished mural has captivated art historians for centuries, and took on fresh impetus in the last years with the employment of state-of-art scientific tools.

Some believe Leonardo's mural, which he began in 1505 to commemorate the 15th-century victory by Florence over Milan at the medieval Tuscan town of Anghiari, may be hidden behind a newer wall, which was frescoed over decades later by Giorgio Vasari. Leonardo's "Battle of Anghiari" was unfinished when Leonardo left Florence in 1506.

Maurizio Seracini, an Italian engineer from the University of California, San Diego, told reporters that the fragments of



This undated picture made available by the by the National Geographic, shows a close-up of Giorgio Vasari's fresco bearing the words "Cerca Trova" (seek and you shall find), that is painted on a wall that researchers believe covers Leonardo da Vinci's "The Battle of Anghiari" lost painting.

color retrieved by the probe in the palace's Hall of the 1500s are consistent with pigments used by Leonardo. He said an analysis showed that the red, black and beige paint found is consistent with the organic paint Leonardo used on his frescoes.

But the paint could also have been used by Leonardo's contemporaries in Florence, which is awash in Renaissance art. Seracini called the results "encouraging" but preliminary.

To find samples of pigment of the wall behind a space previously discovered under the Vasari, work, experts slipped probes through areas where paint on the outer wall's fresco was either cracked or flaked off, noted Cristina Acidini, the head of Florence's cultural heritage and museums.

For one sample, a probe was slipped into a spot near a downward thrusting sword in Vasari's work. For another sample, the probe went through a point near the head of a horse, with its eye open wide as if startled.

Seracini was inspired by the word's "Cerca, trova," ("seek and you shall find") which were painted on a tiny flag in Vasari's painting depicting a different battle. Those who think Leonardo's work might be hidden

behind the later wall painting contend it is unlikely that Vasari, famed for his biographies of Renaissance artists, would have destroyed any masterpiece by Leonardo.

"We have found these very special black pigments, and there are some traces of red," Seracini told reporters. The red is a kind of lacquer "used for oil painting. And this element matches Leonardo's plan to paint his Battle of Anghiari" with an oil technique," Seracini contended.

The hunt for the missing Leonardo mural is being led by the National Geographic Society and the University of California, San Diego, in partnership with the city of Florence. Experts from Florence's world renowned art restoration institute, Opificio delle Pietre Dure, also were involved.

"These data are very encouraging," said Seracini, a National Geographic Fellow. "Although we are still in the preliminary stages of the research, and there is still a lot of work to be done to solve this mystery, the evidence

does suggest that we are searching in the right place," said a National Geographic statement quoting Seracini.

Seracini and his colleagues note that some black material found behind Vasari's wall shows a chemical composition similar found in brown glazes in two Leonardo works, "Mona Lisa" and "St. John the Baptist."

Flakes of red material that were found appear to be organic pigments, the researchers said. A study of high-definition endoscopic images "suggests" that a beige material spotted on the original wall was applied by a paint brush, the researchers aid.

Previously, using radar and X-rays, Seracini and his team found a cavity behind Vasari's fresco that they think could indicate a space between two walls.

Florence Mayor Matteo Renzi said one plan aims to remove some parts of the Vasari fresco which were restored in the 19th and 20th centuries, to look behind them. "We are sure that the 'Battle of Angiari' is behind" Vasari's work, he said.

Streep as Clinton? Tribute gets people talking

NEW YORK (AP)—Meryl Streep is fresh off her Oscar win for playing Margaret Thatcher. But she had an entire theater at Lincoln Center wondering if an even better role for her would be a political icon closer to home: Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The question arose as Streep paid a glowing and affectionate tribute to the secretary of state at the Women in the World summit, an annual gathering of prominent women leaders and unsung heroines from across the globe that closed over the weekend.

"This is what you get when you play a world leader," Streep said Saturday, hoisting up her best-actress Oscar for "The Iron Lady."

"But if you want a real world leader," Streep continued, "THIS is what you get!" Clinton strolled onstage at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' David H. Koch Theater, and Streep enveloped her in a hug.

The three-day summit, now in its third year, is organized by Tina Brown, editor in chief of Newsweek and The Daily Beast. Besides Streep and Clinton, feminist icon Gloria Steinem and former secretary of state Madeleine Albright, Brown harnessed the star power of Angelina Jolie, who came to read the words of Dr. Hawa Abdi, a Somali humanitarian facing danger from Islamist rebels there.

Also given star treatment was International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde, who delighted the delegates at dinner



In this March 9, 2012 file photo, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton speak to the media during a news conference at the State Department in Washington Friday, March 9, 2012.

Thursday when she suggested that the financial crisis might have been averted, or at least been much less serious, if more women had been at the helm of financial institutions.

"If Lehman Brothers had been a bit more Lehman Sisters ... we would not have had the degree of tragedy that we had as a result of what happened," Lagarde said.

She added that recent studies have shown "what the level of testosterone in a given room can produce when you do trading."

Many global problems were addressed by the dozens of panels attended by some 2,000 delegates each day. But a constant undercurrent was an issue at home: the debate in Washington over women's reproductive health care.

Clinton and other speakers referred, obliquely and not, to conservative radio commentator Rush Limbaugh's insulting remarks about law student Sandra Fluke, who came under attack after she testified to congressional Democrats in support of their national health care policy that would compel her Catholic college's health insurance plan to cover birth control.

The 2011 Nobel Peace Prize winner Leymah Gbowee, of Liberia, was the most blunt, saying women had been too passive: "Where are the angry American women?" she asked.

From Liberia to Egypt: Panelists discussed whether the Arab Spring risked becoming an Arab Winter for women, who were central to the popular uprising but now fear being marginalized.

"Tell people there is no spring without flowers and there is no Arab Spring without women," said Dalia Ziada, Egypt director of the American Islamic Congress.

Other popular lines of the weekend included the definition of "glass ceiling," from Jane Harman, the former California Democratic congresswoman: "It's actually a thick layer of men."

How do you puncture that layer? Kah Walla, a political leader from Cameroon, spoke of empowering women across Africa but added that in the United States, too, the level of female representation in politics was a serious issue.

"Every woman here needs to

be involved with getting a woman elected," she said.

The opposition leader in Israel, Tzipi Livni, of the Kadima Party, spoke about the nuclear threat from Iran. But she said she would not engage in what she called "megaphone diplomacy."

"Maybe that's something men do," she quipped.

And Steinem had a good line—speaking on a panel about women leaders, moderated by Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg, she speculated on why some men feel uncomfortable with females in power.

"The last time a lot of powerful guys saw a powerful woman, they were 8," Steinem said. "They feel regressed to childhood by a powerful woman."

Yet men played a role in the summit, too, perhaps none more eloquently than Imam Demba Diawara, a village chief from Senegal. In a powerful discussion of the practice of genital cutting, Diawara, whose own family members had endured the procedure, spoke of how he had gradually come to understand that cutting was dangerous and sometimes fatal. He said he had since visited 378 communities to convince leaders of his view.

"By 2015, we will see the end of genital cutting in Senegal," he predicted.

The conference came to a more lighthearted end with Streep, who spoke humorously of the similarities she shared with Clinton.

AP Interview: Sutherland talks up new show 'Touch'

LONDON (AP)—Kiefer Sutherland admits he had no intention of going back to television after the action-packed "24" ended—but that all changed when he read the script for "Touch."

The U.S. actor was starring on Broadway in a play called "That Championship Season" when he was approached with the script for the science fiction drama.

He was ready to dismiss "Touch" until he found out "Heroes" writer Tim Kring was behind it and Peter Chernin, the head of 20th Century Fox when Sutherland started "24," was producing it.

"I felt I should read it, kind of out of respect to both of those gentlemen. And I did, and I was around page 32 when I went, 'Oh no! Oh no!'" says Sutherland.

The 45-year-old was lured back to TV because, like "24," the show gives audiences something fresh and unique: An international outlook. The first episode alone has scenes set in New York, London, Dublin, Tokyo and Baghdad and features actors from several countries.

"We spend so much time talking and making films and television and our news about the divisive things between human beings, what makes us different," Sutherland told The Associated Press. "It's been a long time since I saw someone approach something from the perspective of, 'What are the things that we have in common?'"

So Sutherland is going from gun-wielding Jack Bauer in

"24" to struggling single dad Martin Bohm in "Touch," which centers on Martin's relationship with his 11-year-old son, Jake, played by David Mazouz.

Wrongly diagnosed as autistic, Jake has never spoken, but has an obsessive connection to patterns and an ability to predict events around the world before they happen.

Mazouz was the first of over 30 children to audition but Sutherland says he knew instantly he was perfect for the part.

"They're both stuck together, but because of this lack of ability to communicate, they

might as well be a thousand miles away. When I look in his eyes, I would feel that," he says. "What I thought was going to be really difficult and challenging (working with a child) is actually the thing I look forward to the most."

Unusually for a U.S. series, "Touch" will launch simultaneously in many countries around the world.

Sutherland is currently traveling around Europe promoting the program, a trip that has seen him visit London, Berlin and Madrid. The actor might be on a tight schedule but he did have time for a spot of shopping in London.

"I went down to the Westminster Abbey gift shop. I promised David, who plays Jake, that I would get him something from every country we visit and I have to do the same thing for my grandsons," says Sutherland.



Sutherland

Hollywood star coached by Olympian

By ROXANNA SCOTT
USA TODAY

If Jennifer Lawrence looks confident and composed shooting a bow in the movie, "The Hunger Games" this spring, it's because she's had some Olympic-caliber coaching.

Four-time Olympic archer Khatuna Lorig was Lawrence's coach, teaching the Hollywood actress all she needed to know to look like a professional archer on camera.

Lorig, who's trying to make her fifth Olympic team, said Lawrence was a quick study. "When she draws the string back, she does really well," Lorig said. "I was surprised; I even told her if she wants to be a professional archer, I think she has potential."

Lorig, 38, has plenty of experience to be a good judge. She made her first Olympics at age 18 when she was living in the Soviet Union and helped her team win a bronze medal at the 1992 Barcelona Games. She went on to compete for Georgia in Atlanta and Sydney. In 2008 she was selected by U.S. athletes to be the flag bearer at the closing ceremonies in Beijing.

The challenge of coaching a movie star was a first for Lorig, who's training in California this spring.

"I think maybe she'll look like a professional archer on the screen," Lorig said of Lawrence. "I wasn't on the screen with her to shoot the movie so if they catch some mistakes in her archery shooting, that's not my fault."



Actress Jennifer Lawrence poses at the Grand Hotel in Minneapolis, Minn., on Friday, March 9, 2012. AP

Premiere buzz whets appetite of 'Hunger' fans

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Hundreds of fans who camped out overnight in front of the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles were rewarded with tickets to "The Hunger Games" premiere.

The frenzy surrounding the big-screen adaptation of the first book in the young-adult series took over the plaza in front of the theater Monday, with fans and media lining the black carpet.

Ticket websites report anticipation for "The

Hunger Games" film matches and may even surpass that for the "Twilight" movies. The last film in that series is set for a fall release.

"The Hunger Games" stars Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson and Liam Hemsworth as teens fighting for survival in a government-controlled world that hosts annual televised games in which participants are forced to kill their opponents.

The film is set for release March 23.

Jack Kerouac play to make its world premiere

NEW YORK (AP)—Jack Kerouac's only full-length play will be staged for the first time this fall.

Merrimack Repertory Theatre and the University of Massachusetts Lowell said Monday—on what would have been Kerouac's 90th birthday—that they will produce the three-act play called "Beat Generation" in the novelist's hometown of Lowell, Mass.

The premiere of the play—a staged reading for eight performances only—will be the centerpiece of the 2012 Jack Kerouac Literary Festival, which will be held Oct. 10 through Oct. 14.

Kerouac wrote "Beat Generation"—which draws on his life and those of other Beat writers, including Neal Cassady and Allen Ginsberg—in 1957, the same year his classic "On the Road" was released.

He tried to build interest for "Beat Generation" in the theater world, con-

tacting such people as Lillian Hellman and Marlon Brando, but he failed and set the manuscript aside. Kerouac died in 1969. The manuscript was found in a warehouse in 2005.

"This is a moment of literary and theatrical history," said Charles Towers, artistic director of the Merrimack Repertory Theatre, which also produced a stage adaptation of Kerouac's Lowell-set romance, "Maggie Cassidy."

Kerouac's other books include "Doctor Sax," "The Subterraneans," "The Dharma Bums" and his final great work, "Big Sur." His first published novel was "The Town and the City."

The author's first actual novel, the 158-page "The Sea is My Brother," was published Monday, in honor of the writer's birthday. The work, written when Kerouac was 21, is the tale of two young men serving on a voyage from Boston to Greenland.



In this 1967 file photo, author Jack Kerouac is shown in Lowell, Mass. AP

Gore says 'democracy has been hacked' at SXSW

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—In a wide-ranging talk about the Internet and government, Al Gore urged the techie crowd at South By Southwest to use digital tools to improve government.

The former vice president sat for a conversation with Napster co-founder and Web entrepreneur Sean Parker on Monday at SXSW in a flashy tete-a-tete that drew an audience of thousands at the Austin Convention Center and more viewers via a live stream.

"Our democracy has been

hacked," said Gore, framing Washington gridlock and the effects of special interest money in digital terms.

To fix what he called a no-longer functional U.S. government, Gore urged the audience to begin a new "Occupy Democracy" movement. He pushed for the creation and implementation of digital tools and social media to "change the democratic conversation."

Gore talked of a "Wiki-democracy" of "digital flash mobs

calling out the truth" and "a government square that holds people accountable."

Parker, who was famously portrayed by Justin Timberlake in "The Social Network," has gotten into politics by investing in Votizen, an online network of voters that leverages social networks to campaign for their issues. He also sits on the board of NationBuilder, which also seeks to organize political change.

Parker said he believes social media is only its infancy of what

it can do to spur action. He cited the Internet rally against the Stop Online Piracy Act as a hint of the power of social networks. He called the protest "Nerd Spring," alluding to the Arab Spring uprisings in the Middle East.

Both Gore and Parker derided the dominant role of television in elections and political dialogue. Change, Parker said, won't come from within the political system.

To applause, Gore added; "I can confirm that."

Teen's free place to live comes with a painful cost

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I am 19 and having an affair with a married man twice my age, but I am an unwilling participant. You see, I grew up with "Jasmine," and over the years her family has become mine. I was going through a rough time, and when her family offered me a place to stay, I accepted.

They treat me like one of their own, buy me presents—even introduce me as a daughter. However, after my birthday party, Jasmine's father came into my bedroom and took advantage of me. I was scared and didn't say anything. Over the past few months, he has sneaked into my room several times to "talk" or rub my back. He always crosses the line, and I'm too afraid to tell him to stop.

I feel sick and guilty when I see Jasmine or her mother, and I'm hurt and ashamed when I see him. I feel betrayed and confused. I tell myself I do it "for a place to stay." Is there forgiveness for me? Please help.

DISTRAUGHT IN THE NORTHWEST

DEAR DISTRAUGHT: It appears you ARE "doing it for a place to stay," and for your own well-being you need to make other living arrangements and get out of there. You have been betrayed, and your feelings are valid. You are not being treated like a daughter; you are being coerced by a man with no conscience or compassion. Of course there is forgiveness for you—but first you have to forgive yourself. Leaving is the first step.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, "Ross," and I have been together for five years and have a 2-year-old child. We talk a lot about marriage and we're engaged—kind of. Ross asked me and I said yes four years ago, but no one knows we're engaged. He bought me a ring and I have been wearing it. Nobody has questioned it.

I want to say something about our plans, but Ross says he's too nervous and is afraid my parents will be angry. I am 23 and unemployed. Ross is 24 and has had bad luck with a bunch of jobs. Our 2-year-old and I live with my parents. Ross is currently staying with his grandparents.

I don't want a big wedding and I'm afraid my parents will be mad if Ross and I start planning ours. How can we break the news to them?

TIMID IN STOCKTON, CALIF.

DEAR TIMID: If Your boyfriend is too nervous to tell anyone about the engagement, face it—you're kind of NOT engaged. If I were you, I'd hold off making any announcements to your folks until you have the answers ready to some questions first, like where you and Ross plan to live after the wedding. With your parents? His grandparents? Who do you expect will be paying for the wedding you're planning?

"Everyone" may have ignored the significance of the ring you're wearing because neither of you is ready for marriage.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: When buying a gift for someone and it arrives with a mail-in rebate, what do you do? If you give the person the rebate, he or she will know how much you paid for the gift. If you remove the UPC code, it looks like you regifted. How should this be handled?

HAVEN'T A CLUE IN EAST HARTFORD, CONN.

DEAR HAVEN'T A CLUE: Many people regift, and as long as the item is well-chosen for the recipient and is in mint condition, there's nothing wrong with the practice. How much was paid for the item is beside the point. When a gift is given, the price tag is removed. Because the mail-in rebate would be a tip-off, it should be removed, too.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

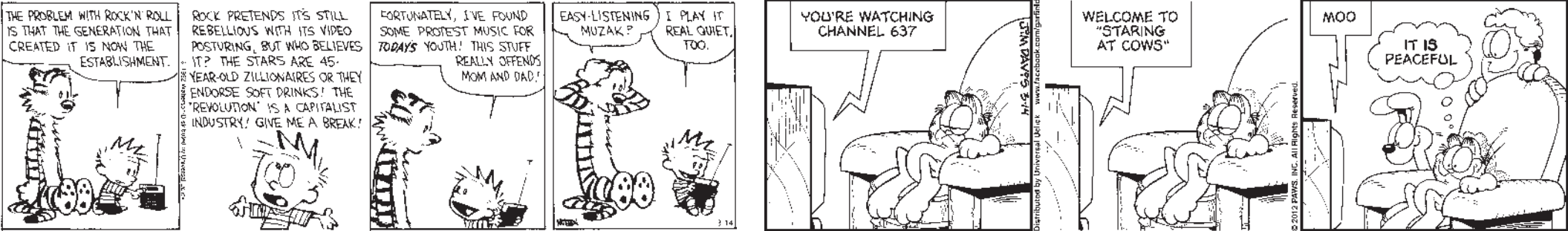
Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson Garfield®

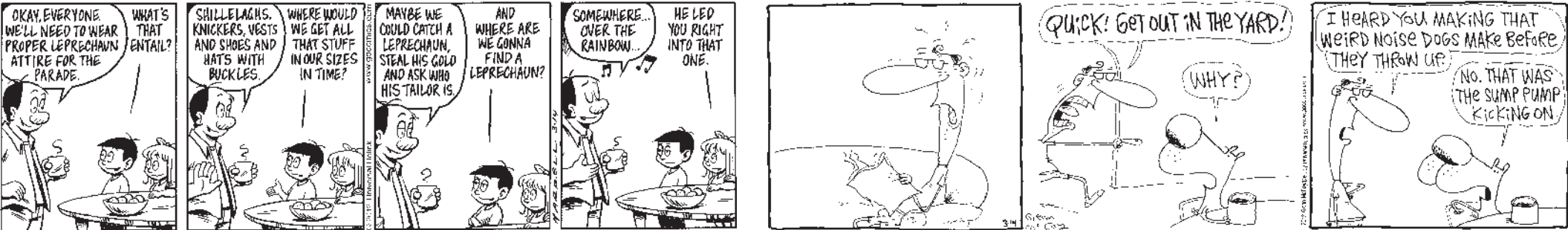
By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Omega

4 Ever-green variety

8 Gulf War missile

12 Disen-cumber

13 Sauce thickener

14 Heap

15 Individual

16 Form into a whole

18 Song of David

20 Demure

21 Dines on

24 Coffee option

28 Vex

32 Toss the dice

33 Ultramod-ernist

34 Banish

36 Dove's call

37 Ham-mer's target

39 Flood

41 Pie-in-the-face sound

43 Pleased

DOWN

44 Flop

46 Where-withal

50 Settle in a new country

55 "A pox upon thee!"

56 Pugilist's garment

57 MPs' quarry

58 Expert

59 Greek vowels

60 Clothing store

61 Scarlet

2 Trans-gressions

3 Concept

4 Ape, e.g.

5 Charged bit

6 Cashew or almond

7 Corp.

8 More agile

9 U.S. spy grp.

10 Last (Abbr.)

11 Sandra or Ruby

17 Deity

19 Floral neckwear

22 Cab

23 Con game

25 Imogene of old TV

26 Oodles

27 Ice sheet

28 Hostels

29 Harvest

30 Stir up

31 Hebrew month

35 Paint store

38 Half the audi-ence?

40 JFK prede-cessor

42 Yank

45 Pharma-cist's weight

47 Off in the distance

48 Pleasant

49 Start a garden

50 Rage

51 Witticism

52 Biz deg.

53 Shock and —

54 Won — soup

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterdays answer 3-14

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Megan Follows, 44; Billy Crystal, 64; Quincy Jones, 79; Michael Caine, 79.

Happy Birthday: Stick to the truth. You cannot let your emotions interfere with your productivity. Falling behind will not sit well with someone judging you by the results you are getting. Less talk, less travel and more time spent doing what needs to be done will lead to your advancement. Being responsible is your ticket to success. Your numbers are 9, 13, 16, 28, 34, 37, 49.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Choose to be practical, especially when it comes to work and getting along with your peers. A little charm coupled with realistic plans for the future will be your ticket to victory. Avoid dealing with unpredictable people. *****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): A money problem will develop if you give in to someone who is pressuring you to spend. Invest in you, not someone else. Put more effort into self-improvement and networking with people who can help you advance. You'll learn from experience. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Personal problems will develop if you aren't completely honest about the way you feel and what your intentions are. You'll have great ideas that will bring you closer to someone with whom you would like to spend more time. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Steady progress will raise your profile. Stick to tried-and-true methods and you will be successful. Avoid anyone who shows signs of un-

predictability. Adjust the way you handle partners according to the way you are being treated. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't let anyone put you down. Participate in activities that let you express your thoughts and ideas as well as expand your circle of friends. The people you meet now will help you realize your potential and what you want to do next. *****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Travel to visit someone who inspires you. Take on projects that allow you to use your skills to the fullest. Self-improvement of any nature will help you excel. Love and romance are highlighted. Make plans to do something you enjoy. **

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Not everyone will be easy to communicate with. Take your time and leave your emotions out of any discussion you have. Focus on equality and making things work for everyone involved. Mediating will lead to an opportunity you cannot refuse. ****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Listen carefully to what's being said. If you can determine what it will take to keep everyone happy, you will save yourself time and money. An important relationship can be taken to the next level. Show how much you care. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll find it difficult to keep your feelings hidden. Someone will use emotional blackmail to get back at you. A change at home will help you realize the difference you can make to your emotional well-being and your surroundings. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Put emphasis on home, family and investments. You can make gains through property or partnerships, or by starting a small home-based business. Love is in the stars, and sharing all aspects of life with someone special will help you excel. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): A last-minute change can benefit you professionally. Guard against anyone who uses emotions to upset your world. A passionate approach will attract people interested in joining your team. A partnership will need nurturing. ****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't be too quick to share your feelings. Someone from your past is likely to take advantage of your vulnerability. Focus on making changes that will protect you from distracting outside influences. It's your turn to ask for a favor. **

Birthday Baby: You are big-hearted, quick to help others and passionate about living life fully.

Eugenia's Web sites: eugenialast.com for confidential consultations, myspace.com/eugenialast for Eugenia's blog, astroadvice.com for fun

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

				1	4					
				4			6			
			9				2	5		
3		9	5		3	1				
4				4	5	8		7		
	7							9		
		8	9	1	4	2				
		3		6						

Difficulty Level ★★★

3/14

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	7	4	1	2	6	8	9	3
8	2	1	9	3	5	4	7	6
9	3	6	8	7	4	5	1	2
6	5	3	2	9	8	7	4	1
4	1	7	5	6	3	9	2	8
2	9	8	7	4	1	3	6	5
7	4	5	6	8	2	1	3	9
3	8	2	4	1	9	6	5	7
1	6	9	3	5	7	2	8	4

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

LAVA LAMP

Solution: 4 letters

BYTIVARGROOVYNN
ULDAVALPHAETHON
LEEIOLESABIONVI
BGSNBLOBSSUFREF
ENICDIFTNRLOELF
ZAGAOHEGALPITA
IHNNNOEDLMOAQGYR
SCCDMYAMCHUSLLA
OYVEESALSIOAIIIP
PLESSBEEDOLLTGL
RISCLABRIGHTTHU
ONSERUTAREPMETG
PDENTSECALPARTY
YELTTOBSNRETTAP
LRELAXINGLOBESW

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Base, Blend, Blobs, Bottle, Bright, Bulb, Change, Clear, Color, Cylinder, Density, Design, Dyes, Fill, Float, Glitter, Globes, Gravity, Groovy, Hourglass, Incandescent, Isopropyl, Lava, Light, Liquid, Mood, Nonflammable, Novelty, Paraffin, Party, Patterns, Phaethon, Places, Plug, Relaxing, Salt, Size, Temperature, Theme, Tube Shape, Vessel, Warm

Yesterday's Answer: Believe

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STUMPED?

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WHATZIT Solution: Computer printout

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Closing Date: Monday, March 19, 2012

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LOCATION: Water Laboratory, SAIPAN.

SALARY: \$15,139.00 to \$23,465.00 per annum, un-classified, un-graded.

POSITIONS: One (1)

CONTRACT: Not contracted.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: High school diploma, GED or ABE. Higher education and related work experience preferred. Knowledge of: Mathematics; Basic knowledge of chemicals; Safety procedures. Skills in: Collecting samples; Performing routine analysis; Preparing media; Following laboratory procedures; Using computers and related software applications; Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. APPLICANTS MAY BE TESTED.

Drop off your CUC Employment Application at the CUC Human Resource Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan. Otherwise, you may drop it off at the CUC Tinian or CUC Rota Administration Office.

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
■ All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Rose scores 32 to lead Bulls past Knicks



CHICAGO (AP)—Derrick Rose scored 32 points as the Chicago Bulls beat New York 104-99 on Monday night, handing the Knicks their sixth straight loss.

Rose shot 12 of 29 from the floor and had six rebounds and seven assists as the Bulls got their 10th win in 11 games.

Taj Gibson had 15 points and a team-high 13 rebounds for Chicago.

Carmelo Anthony led the Knicks with 21 points and Amare Stoudemire added 20, but the two combined for just seven points in the fourth quarter as the Bulls pulled away.

Jeremy Lin had 15 points and eight assists for New York, but shot just 4 of 11 from the floor and had little luck stopping Rose.

Timberwolves 127, Suns 124

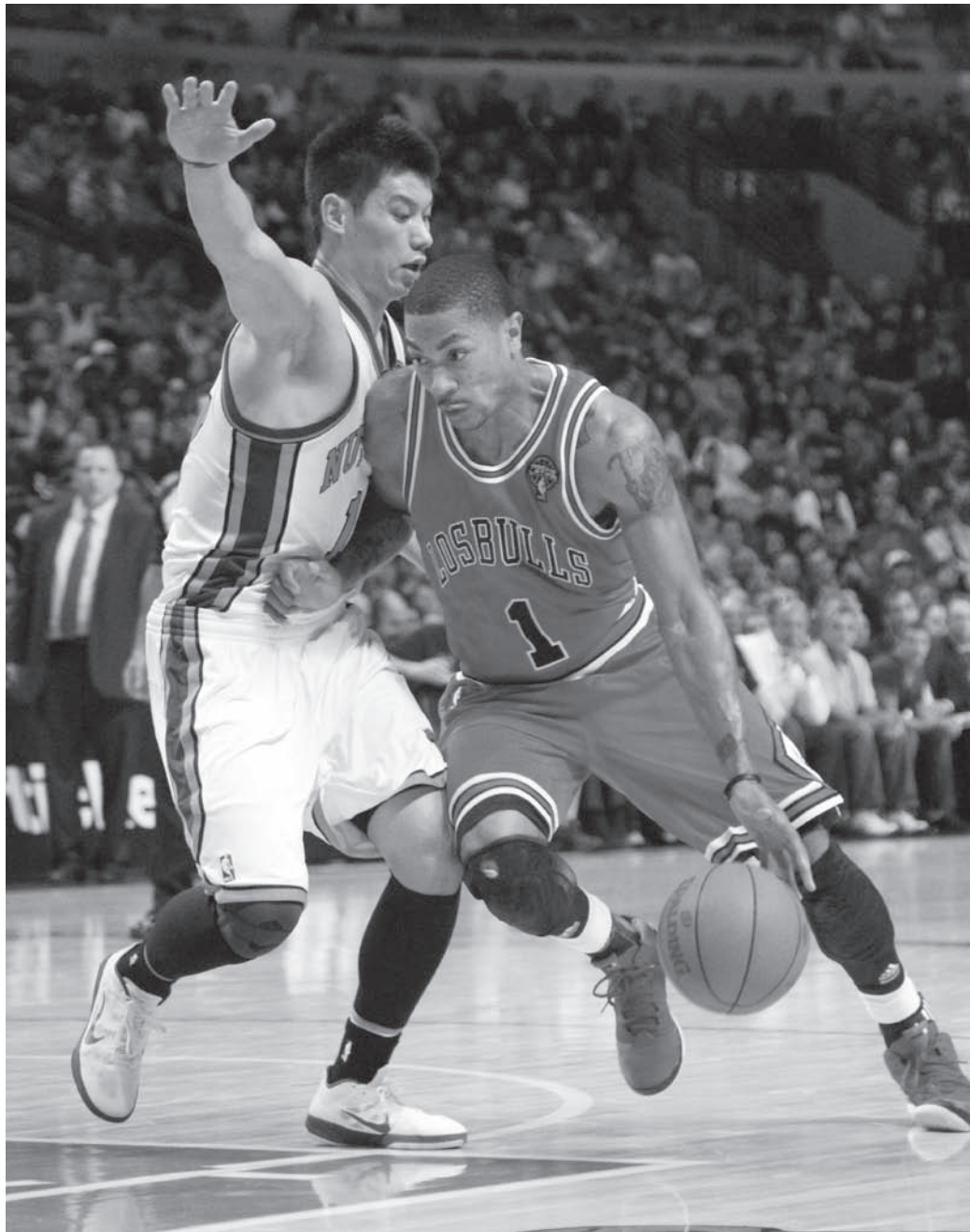
In Phoenix, Kevin Love scored 13 of his game-high 30 points in the fourth quarter as the Minnesota Timberwolves outlasted the Suns.

Nikola Pekovic scored 24 points and Derrick Williams added 19 to help the Timberwolves end a nine-game losing streak in Phoenix.

Jared Dudley scored a season-high 28 points, Steve Nash had 25 and Channing Frye added 18 for the Suns, who snapped a three-game winning streak.

Sebastian Telfair scored six points in seven seconds—converting a four-point play and stealing the ensuing inbound pass and scoring a layup—to give the Suns a 111-107 lead with 6:38 left.

Luke Ridnour put Minnesota ahead for good, 121-120, with 1:50 to go and the Timberwolves made six straight free throws in



Chicago Bulls guard Derrick Rose (1) drives on New York Knicks guard Jeremy Lin during the second half of an NBA basketball game Monday, March 12, 2012, in Chicago.

the final 37.8 seconds to close out the game.

Celtics 94, Clippers 85

In Los Angeles, Paul Pierce scored 10 of his 25 points in the fourth quarter and Kevin Gar-

nett added 21 points and eight rebounds as Boston made an impressive late rally to win for the second time in their last nine road games.

Ray Allen scored 15 points and Rajon Rondo had 12 points and

10 assists for the Celtics, who recovered after blowing a 10-point lead in the final minutes.

Blake Griffin had 24 points and nine rebounds for the Clippers, who have lost four of five while falling behind the Lakers

atop the Pacific Division. Chris Paul had 14 points on 3-for-12 shooting in his second game wearing a clear protective mask over his broken nose.

JAZZ 105, PISTONS 90

In Salt Lake City, Al Jefferson scored 33 points to lead Utah past Detroit.

C.J. Miles added 15 points, including three 3-pointers in the fourth quarter, to help the Jazz end a two-game skid and snap Detroit's three-game winning streak.

Rodney Stuckey scored 29 points for the Pistons, who have not won in Salt Lake City since 2002—losing their last nine visits here.

The win ended a drama-filled day for the Jazz that started with a closed-door meeting between guard Raja Bell and team officials. It came two days after Bell was sent home from a road trip following a verbal clash with coach Tyrone Corbin, but both sides proclaimed the matter closed. Bell started, but had just one point.

Spurs 112, Wizards 97

In San Antonio, Tony Parker scored 31 points in his return from a one-game absence to lead San Antonio past Washington.

Parker, who missed Friday's loss to the Los Angeles Clippers with a strained right quadriceps, hit 13 of 18 shots and had seven assists. Tiago Splitter scored 17 points, Tim Duncan added 14, and DeJuan Blair had 11 points and 12 rebounds.

The Spurs extended their winning streak over the Wizards to 12. Washington has lost nine of its last 11 and fell to 3-15 on the road.

JaVale McGee led the Wiz-

ards with 21 points and 15 rebounds, and Jordan Crawford added 19 points.

Bobcats 73, Hornets 71

In New Orleans, Gerald Henderson scored 15 points and rookie Bismack Biyombo blocked Trevor Ariza's driving dunk attempt in the final seconds as Charlotte held on to beat the Hornets.

Kemba Walker added 14 points, including 10 during a decisive 22-5 run that spanned from late in the third quarter to midway through the fourth. Biyombo finished with 12 points and four blocks for Charlotte, which snapped a three-game losing streak but still has the league's worst record at 6-34.

Jarrett Jack 15 points and nine assists for New Orleans, which has lost five of six in falling to 10-32. Chris Kaman has 12 points and 16 rebounds, while Marco Belinelli and Ariza each scored 12 points for the Hornets.

Bucks 105, Nets 99

In Newark, Brandon Jennings has 34 points, seven assists and seven rebounds as Milwaukee beat New Jersey for the 10th consecutive time.

Drew Gooden added 23 points, eight rebounds and seven assists as the Bucks rallied from an early 12-point deficit. Beno Udrih added 15 points and seven assists and Mike Dunleavy had 15 points, including a 3-pointer from the corner with 1:30 to go that opened a 10-point lead.

Kris Humphries had a career-high 31 points and 18 rebounds for New Jersey, which lost its second straight without point guard Deron Williams. Jordan Farmar added 17 points and seven assists, while Anthony Morrow also scored 17.

Baylor, Stanford, UConn, Irish earn No. 1 seeds

By DOUG FEINBERG
AP BASKETBALL WRITER



Brittney Griner and the Baylor Lady Bears have one goal this season—a national championship.

Anything less would be a disappointment for the undefeated top-seeded Lady Bears, who are looking to become the seventh school to run through a season unbeaten.

Standing in the way could be the other No. 1 seeds—Stanford, Connecticut and Notre Dame, dominant all season long. The Huskies and Irish both lost competitive games at Baylor this season.

Griner and Baylor, who lost in the regional final last season, could be the first team ever to win 40 games in a year, but coach Kim Mulkey only cares about one thing—a second national title for the school.

"We started hearing about

that, and it's never been a goal of ours," Mulkey said of winning 40 games. "Our simple goal is to win a national championship."

The basketball madness gets started Saturday—the first step en route to the Final Four, which begins April 1 in Denver.

To get to their second Final Four in three seasons, the Lady Bears might have to get through Tennessee, which is appearing in its 31st straight NCAA tournament.

"I wish I was not in the same bracket as Pat (Summitt), because of the respect I have and also because we've already played," Mulkey said.

The two teams met in November, and Tennessee held an eight-point lead early in the second half before Griner took over en route to a nine-point victory.

The 6-foot-8 phenom has been dominant lately scoring more than 40 points twice in the past 10 games, including a 45-point effort in the Big 12 tournament semifinals this past weekend.

The Lady Vols have won eight national championships but haven't been to the Final Four in three seasons. They pledged at the beginning of the season that they would not go a fourth consecutive year without reaching the Final Four—something they've never done—and would try to win a national title to honor Pat Summitt. The coach announced in August she'd been diagnosed with early onset dementia, Alzheimer's type.

Summitt's squad will face her alma mater—Tennessee Martin—in the opener.

"I like my alma mater," Summitt said. "I like winning and moving on better."

Before a potential matchup with Baylor, Tennessee could meet Delaware and the nation's leading scorer Elena Delle Donne. The 6-5 star is averaging 27.5 points this season and has guided the Blue Hens to a 30-1 mark.

Now they are looking for their first NCAA tournament victory.

Connecticut hopes to win its eighth national championship (ty-

ing Tennessee) and will start with a matchup against Prairie View.

UConn coach Geno Auriemma told the Huskies' faithful in the preseason that this team wouldn't win a national championship. But his young team has developed over the past five months, and Connecticut looks poised to make another run after beating Notre Dame for the Big East tournament title.

"If you have to rely just on momentum then you don't have a good enough team," Auriemma said. "We've got to hope we have a good enough team and then rely on momentum as an extra asset."

The Irish also have been focused on winning a title after falling just short last season, losing in the championship game to Texas A&M, which is a No. 3 seed in the Raleigh region. The two teams could meet in the regional final.

Notre Dame, which will open up at home against Liberty, reached the national title game

last year by knocking off UConn in the Final Four. It was the fourth straight season that UConn made the Final Four. The two teams, who already have played three times this year, could meet for a fourth time in Denver.

The Cardinal also have advanced four straight seasons to the Final Four, and coach Tara VanDerveer is looking to get her first title in 20 years. She'll begin with a trip East to Norfolk, Va. to face Hampton. Stanford, which has won 28 straight games since its lone loss of the season to Connecticut, hasn't been east of the Rockies since 2001, when they went to Oklahoma.

"Well last year at this time I don't think anyone thought Texas A&M was going to win either," VanDerveer said. "Baylor has had a great year. I think that Brittney Griner is a great player, she's a tremendous talent. We know that every team is beatable. I hope we have a chance to play them. We want to go as far as we can. If that means playing Baylor, we'll be ready."

Standing in the way of a fifth trip to the Final Four could be

second-seed Duke, which lost in the ACC tournament quarterfinals. The Blue Devils are led by talented freshman post Elizabeth Williams and sophomore guard Chelsea Grey and will face Samford in the opening round.

Another intriguing team in that region is third-seeded St. John's, which ended UConn's 99-game homecourt winning streak in February. The Red Storm have won 14 of their last 17 games after falling to the Huskies in the semifinals of the Big East tournament. Third seed St. John's faces Creighton in its opener.

Missing from the tournament is North Carolina, which is hosting the first two rounds, but didn't make the field for the first time since 2001.

While the Tar Heels will be missing, three schools—Albany, St. Bonaventure and Florida Gulf Coast—are making their first appearance, and the Big Ten has a conference record seven teams.

The Bonnies and Eagles will be meeting in the first round.

Randy Moss agrees to deal with 49ers



SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP)—Randy Moss is ready to show the world he can still be that dynamic deep threat who once dominated NFL defensive backs.

Even after a year away. Even at age 35. Even with a reputation he says isn't all it's made out to be.

Moss is getting a another chance in the NFL, signing a one-year contract with the San Francisco 49ers on Monday only hours after he worked out for the team and with former NFL quarterback and current coach Jim Harbaugh.

"I'm not a free agent. I'm a guy straight off the couch, straight off the street," Moss said. "One thing I want the sports world to understand is the love and passion I have for football."

Moss will fill a big void for the reigning NFC West champions in Harbaugh's version of the West Coast offense.

While he didn't go as far as to promise not to pout when times are tough, he did say all the right things, and that he plans to be a positive presence in a locker room known for its blue-collar, unselfish approach. Moss has no interest in reflecting on his past, either.

This is a fresh start.

"The thing about me being here is they've done their research on me. When it comes to the worldwide sports media, I've gotten a bad rap," Moss said.

"They've done their homework on me or they wouldn't have brought me in here. ... (The questions were) more of me not being a team player and things like that. I don't want to get into that."

Moss got a good vibe about the organization from the moment he was picked up at the airport Sunday night, calling it a "no-brainer" to sign. He said the organization quickly decided to "pull the trigger"—and it's a low-risk, high-reward move for San Francisco.

"Harbaugh is a young, enthusiastic coach. I love enthusiasm," Moss said. "A lot of things stood out to me."

It seems Harbaugh's throws were on target, too.

"Jim Harbaugh makes 49ers veteran emergency board: Best coach's workout in NFL history (especially while wearing khakis & a sweatshirt)," Niners CEO Jed York tweeted.

Moss, who worked out last Tuesday with the New Orleans Saints, spent a year out of football and last played for New England, Minnesota and Tennessee during a rocky 2010 season.

He said he enjoyed playing catch with Harbaugh, a 15-year NFL pro in his day.

"Yes, he can still bring it at his old age. I don't know, he's probably sitting there with an ice pack or something on his shoulder right now," Moss said. "He can still wing it."

The 49ers can sure use him. San Francisco's receivers man-

aged just one catch for 3 yards in a 20-17 loss in the NFC championship game to the eventual Super Bowl champion New York Giants at Candlestick Park on Jan. 22.

York told reporters earlier Monday at team headquarters his team needed "someone to stretch the field." The athletic, 6-foot-4 Moss fits the bill.

Moss said he initially retired for "personal reasons outside of football" and considered making a comeback late in the 2011 season before ultimately deciding to give his body more time to train. He suffered a shoulder injury during 2010 with New England.

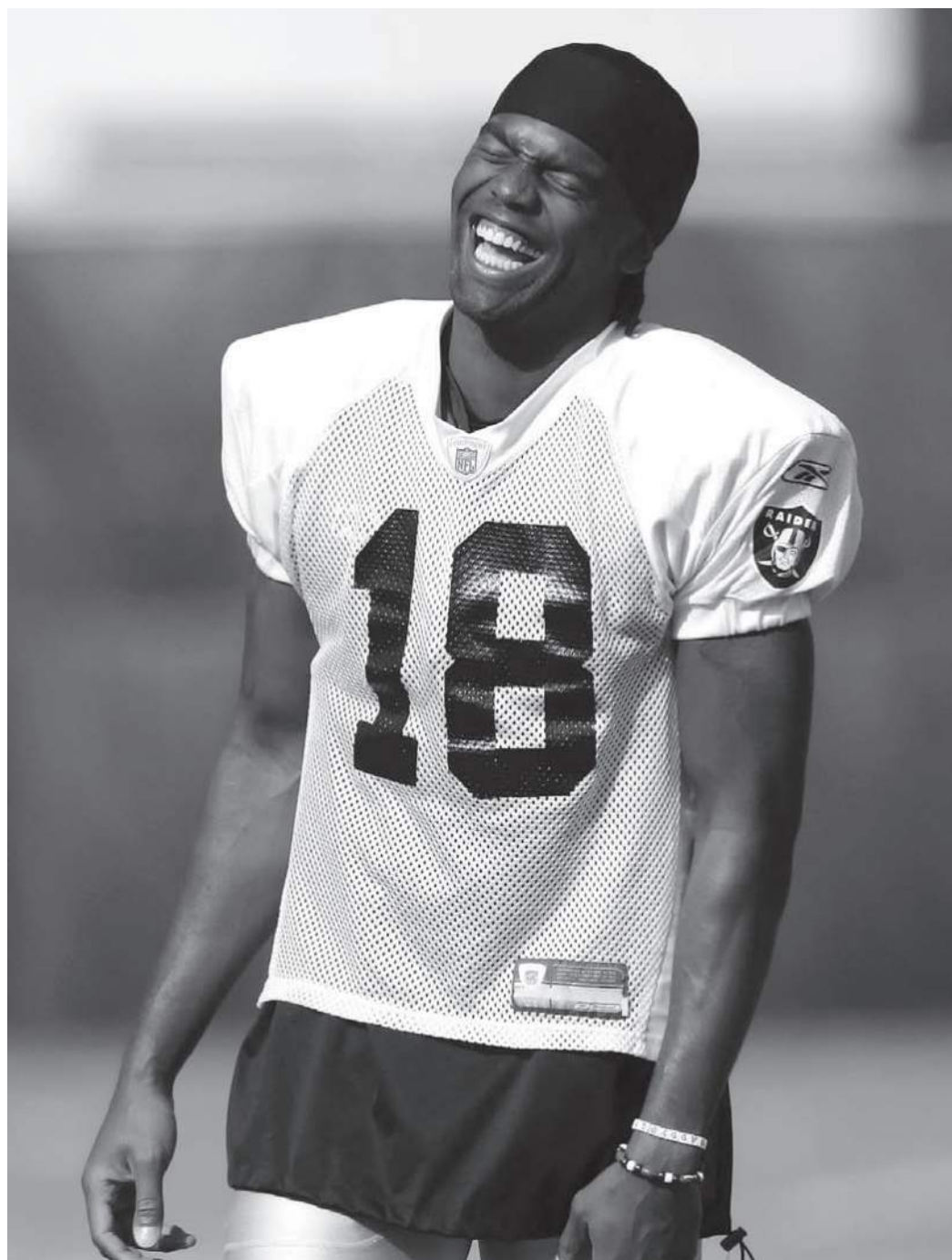
Moss always believed he could still perform.

"It was a decision to get back in the game because I still love the game and think I can play at a high level," he said. "It was obvious they liked what they saw. I don't want to let them down."

The 49ers also are working to re-sign quarterback Alex Smith, the No. 1 overall draft pick in 2005, and have reportedly made him a three-year offer. Smith's representatives haven't returned multiple messages seeking an update on the status of negotiations.

"Alex is trying to figure out what he wants to do," York said. "There have been good conversations back and forth."

If Moss proves himself during workouts this spring and



This Aug. 1, 2006 file photo shows Oakland Raiders' wide receiver Randy Moss laughing before football training camp in Napa, Calif. AP

Source: Peyton Manning to meet with Tennessee

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—A person familiar with the situation says the Tennessee Titans will be visiting with four-time NFL MVP Peyton Manning in his search for a new team.

ESPN.com first reported Titans coach Mike Munchak will meet with Manning after a session with Miami coach Joe Philbin.

The person spoke to The Associated Press Monday about Manning's meeting with the Titans on the condition of anonymity because the location and time of that meeting remains confidential.

Titans owner Bud Adams made it known Sunday he will do whatever it takes to sign Manning to get back to the playoffs and win his team's first Super Bowl. Adams told The Tennessean he had talked to Manning's agent, Tom Condon, asking for a visit with the quarterback.

Manning has plenty of connections to Tennessee.

He starred at the University of Tennessee, leading to his first name becoming a popular choice for newborns in this state. His wife is from Memphis, and Manning already knows the Titans' facility a bit, having practiced against Tennessee a few years ago when the Colts came to town for

some joint practices.

Munchak also was a teammate of Archie Manning in 1982 and briefly in 1983 with the then-Houston Oilers. Munchak just hired Dennis Polian—son of former Colts general manager Bill Polian—as his assistant.

But the biggest key is Adams, the 89-year-old billionaire who wants back in the playoffs. His Titans have been only twice since 2004 with both trips in 2007 and 2008 lasting only one game each. A meeting with Manning could come in Houston where Adams still lives after relocating his Oilers to Tennessee in 1997.

"I want Manning," Adams told The Tennessean. "I'd love to see him in Titan blue after watching him so many years with the Colts. ... I want him. I am ready to do what it takes to get him aboard, and I think he'd be the guy to get us into the playoffs."

The Titans already have veteran Matt Hasselbeck, signed to a three-year contract last July, and Jake Locker picked with the No. 8 overall selection in the 2011 draft. But Hasselbeck is due \$5.5 million in salary this year after getting a chunk of his deal last season.

So far, Manning has met only with the Denver Broncos

and Arizona Cardinals.

He was expected to be heading back to Florida, but did not show at the Dolphins' headquarters Monday despite reports he would meet with the team.

Dolphins owner Stephen Ross arrived at the team complex at midmorning, and several players—including quarterback Chad Henne—showed up around the same time to work out. Henne is a free agent and not expected back this season.

A media stakeout at the complex began when a local TV station camera crew arrived at 4 a.m. Half a dozen TV cameras and a handful of reporters eventually gathered across the street. They weren't allowed on the team's property, but a Dolphins official brought out water, pizza and napkins.

Curious motorists occasionally pulled up to ask for an update.

Manning spent nearly 6 1/2 hours at the Arizona Cardinals' headquarters and training facility on Sunday in meetings designed to lure the superstar to the desert.

The session followed a meeting of nearly six hours Manning had at the Broncos' facility in Denver on Friday night. The two sessions were evidence that, for the time being at least, Arizona and Denver appear to be the top two contenders.

training camp, he could be a viable deep threat that San Francisco hoped it had in Braylon Edwards last season.

The 49ers cut ties with Edwards in December. Joshua Morgan broke a bone in his lower leg Oct. 9 against Tampa Bay and later had surgery to have screws inserted and was placed on season-ending injured reserve. Morgan is expected to generate his share of interest in free agency, and receiver and return man Ted Ginn Jr. might not return.

Michael Crabtree, San Francisco's 10th overall pick in the 2009 draft, had 72 receptions for 874 yards and four touch-

downs in 2011. San Francisco went 13-3 and ended an eight-year drought without a playoff berth or winning record.

Moss' best season came for the Patriots in 2007, when he caught 98 passes for 1,493 yards and a single-season record 23 touchdowns in helping New England to a 16-0 regular-season record. He has 954 catches for 14,858 yards and 153 TDs in his 13-year career, which included a stint in the Bay Area with the Oakland Raiders in 2005 and '06 where he produced little on the field.

Running back Anthony Dixon watched Moss' workout Monday, and came away giddy.

"Randy Moss done linked up with us. Oh it's about to get scary like the end of October!" Dixon tweeted.

Moss has had more than 1,000 yards receiving in a season 10 times, second only to Hall of Famer Jerry Rice, who accomplished the feat 14 times.

Moss hasn't lost his swagger. "I accept the challenge and I'm ready to bring the fans out of their seats," he said, noting he considers this a chance to give back to the game. "I like what I can do for the NFL. I don't like what the NFL can do for me."

ESPN first reported the move a day before the start of the free agency period.

Woods says he hopes to play next week at Bay Hill



JUPITER, Fla.

(AP)—Tiger Woods said Monday night his left Achilles tendon is mildly strained and he is hopeful he can still play next week at Bay Hill.

Woods withdrew from the Cadillac Championship at Doral on Sunday after hitting his tee shot on the 12th hole.

"Got good news from doc tonight," he posted on his Twitter account. "Only mild strain of left Achilles. Can resume hitting balls late in week and hopeful

for next week."

Woods is scheduled to play the Arnold Palmer Invitational at Bay Hill, which starts March 22, his final tournament before the Masters. He has played Augusta National every year since 1995.

He said his left Achilles tendon, which caused him to miss two majors last year, felt tight as he warmed up on the practice range before the final round of the Cadillac Championship, and it got worse from there.

It was the second time in 10 months that Woods had to

withdraw from a tournament because of his Achilles. He also left after shooting a 42 on the front nine of The Players Championship last May, causing him to sit out three months until it was completely healed. There were some in his camp who did not want him to compete in The Players to give the injury more time.

Woods said in a statement Sunday after withdrawing, "In the past, I may have tried to continue to play, but this time, I decided to do what I thought was necessary."

7th Saipan Marathon Winners

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Noriko Jim, left, accepts her first place plaque (10K) during the awards ceremony for the 7th Saipan Marathon at beachside of the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.



Half marathon runner-up Ronald Villafria, left, poses with Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio.



Half marathon winner Terra Allen smiles after getting her prizes.



Dawn Hammermeister, left, receives her third place plaque (half marathon) from Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio.



Beijing's Shuai Yang, left, receives his first place plaque (marathon) from Hyatt Regency Saipan's Nick Nishikawa.



Mamiko Oshima-Berger waits for her name to be called during the awards presentation for the marathon.



Barefoot runner Chang Whan Jang gives a thumbs-up sign after receiving his first place (over 60 division) medal in the marathon.



10K winner Charles Epperson, left, poses for a photo with a Japanese guest.



Age group winners in the 10K wait for other top finishers.

Activity Schedule for March 14, 2012

8:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Morning practices

6:30 PM to 9:30 PM: Evening practices

There are no scheduled games.

There are no scheduled games.



**Rose scores
32 to lead
Bulls past
Knicks**
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Saipan Tribune Sports

**Randy Moss
agrees to
deal with
49ers**
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28 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2012

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Back-to-back for GCA Eagles



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Grace Christian Academy clinched its second straight boys junior varsity championship after downing Mt. Carmel School in the finals of the 2011-2012 Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association Basketball League, 35-34, last Friday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.



The Eagles, who won last year's JV finals against Saipan International School, 33-23, built an early double-digit lead in the second quarter and then withstood the Knights' late rally for a successful title defense.

GCA led by as much as 17 in the second quarter, 24-7, after limiting MCS to only one field goal in that period. The Eagles had 12 points in the second canto, turning a 12-5 advantage at the end of the first frame to a twin-digit lead at the break. Billy Hinson an-

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Mobil survives Crystal Pure in OT

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Mobil started a streak for the first time after eking out a 91-90 victory over Crystal Pure/Mekeni Abe in overtime during the second game in the 2nd Domino Lux International Fraternity/Miller Lite Basketball

Invitational Friendship League last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

Jun Estolas went 1-for-4 from the foul line in the closing seconds of the extension, while Crystal Pure's Kae Bernardo missed two charities, giving Mobil its second straight win and third overall in four games. Mobil failed to have a win-

See MOBIL on Page 26



Jun Estolas, seen here going up for a shot against Blue Haus' Brendon Taliana in their unfinished game, made a free throw to lift Mobil to a 91-90 win over Crystal Pure in the DLX/Miller Lite caging last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

Ol'Aces outlast Enforcers, 9-8

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



The Hawaiya Technologies, Inc. Ol'Aces outlasted the DPS Dare Program Leep Enforcers, 9-8, in Monday's Saipan Little League Baseball's Junior Division matchup held at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

In addition, Sunday's Senior League results include the Eli D. Cabrera-Antonio Sablan Hunters pinning down the Juan Santiago Jets II, 3-0; the Marianas Cable Vision Kagman Lions pouncing DPS Dare Enforcers, 15-4; and the Docomo Pacific Ol'Aces pelting the San Roque D-9ers, 17-1.

JUNIOR LEAGUE Ol'Aces 9, Enforcers 8

Ol'Aces drew first blood with a



Hawaiya Technologies, Inc. Ol'Aces' Michael Muna fires home a pitch in Monday's Junior League matchup against the DPS Dare Program Leep Enforcers held at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

pair of runs in the bottom of the first inning off a sacrifice fly by Jessie Brel and an error.

Enforcers' Celeb Takao answered with an RBI double and scored off a passed ball in the top half of the second and teams traded a run in the third frame to lock it at 3-3. The Enforcers scored off an error and Ol'Aces via an RBI single by Payton Lizama.

The Enforcers then took advantage of an outfield error for two runs to start the fourth inning, but Ol'Aces got them back in the bottom frame with an RBI base rip by Michael Muna. He later stole home.

The Enforcers went after Ol'Aces relief pitcher Kenji Yamagata at the start of the fifth inning and mustered two runs off a pair of RBI base hits by Truman Shiro and Franklin Lizama.

Ol'Aces, however, gashed the Enforcers once starter Darion Jones left the mound and tallied four runs in the bottom

See OL'ACES on Page 26

2012 Rota Fishing Derby starts tomorrow

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

San Isidro Church Council and its supporters are sponsoring the 2012 Rota Fishing Derby tomorrow through Friday to help raise funds to build a new social hall.

The council also plans to provide improved living accommodations for Rev. Mon-

signor Louis Antonelly within the new structure.

A total of \$40,000 has already been raised, but the council still needs additional funding in order to complete the project.

In case of bad weather, organizers have devised a contingency plan, but as of today, are going ahead with its tentative schedule.

A \$10,000 grand prize, provided by Ambros Guam, Inc., goes to the team that brings in the heaviest catch exceeding 500-lbs to Rota's West Dock Marina.

A \$5,000 baby grand prize co-sponsored by Pacific Insurance Underwriters, Inc. and Century Insurance Co. will be awarded to a runner-up catch of

over 500 lbs.

In addition, the Top 3 place finishers in the billfish, mahi-mahi, tuna bonita, and yellowfin tuna categories will also be awarded various prize packages.

The entrance fee is set at \$150 per boat, which covers two anglers; each additional angler costs \$25.

The deadline to register is 4:30pm today.

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